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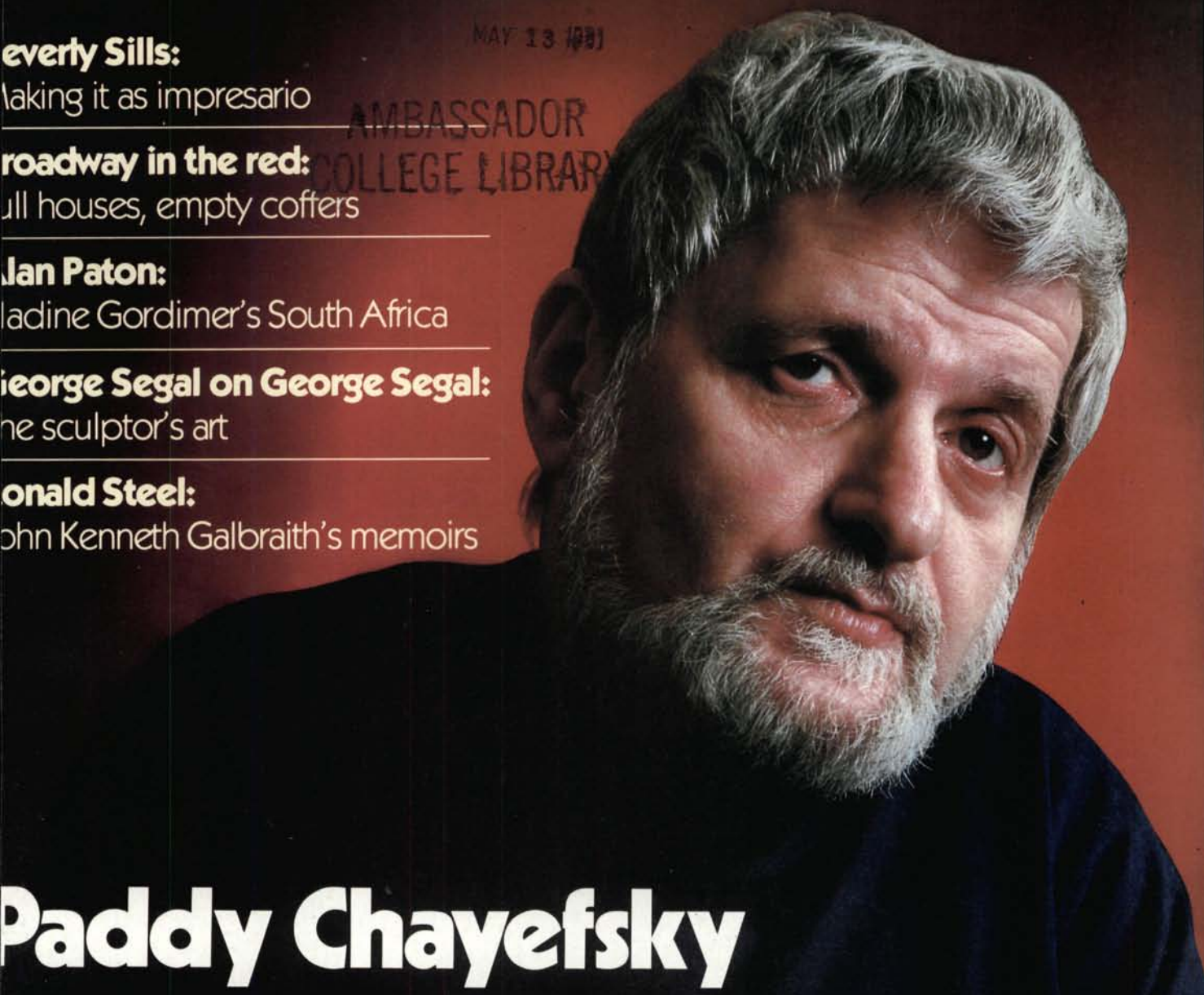

Paddy Chayefsky

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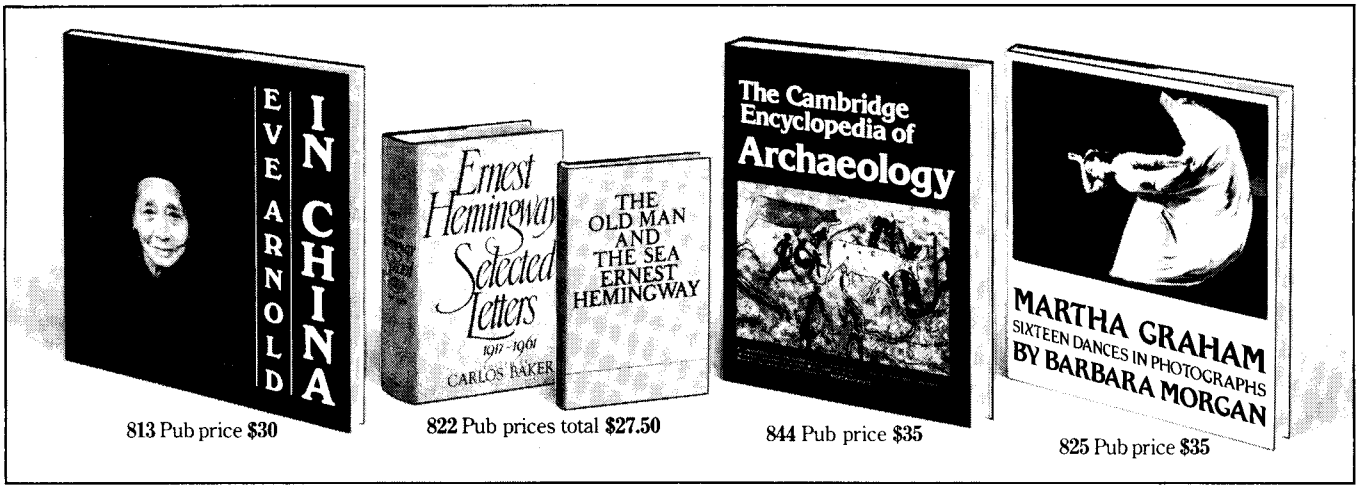

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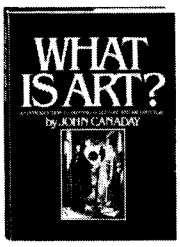

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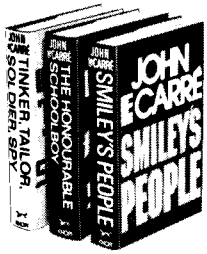

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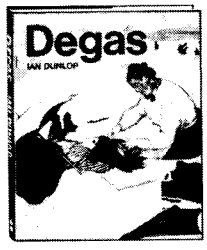

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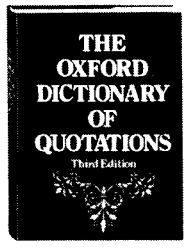

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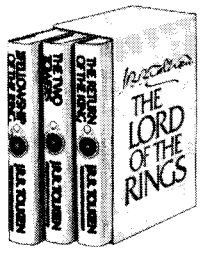

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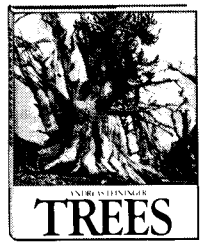

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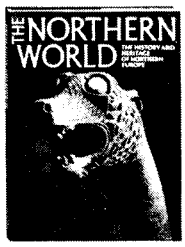

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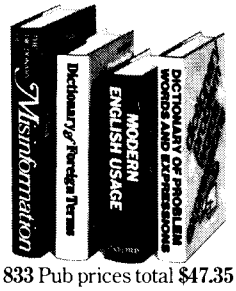

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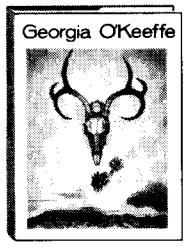

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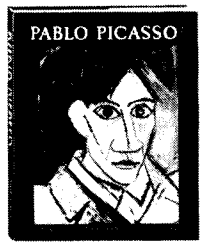

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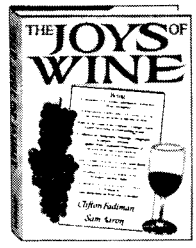

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TRUTH TEST

"The best test of truth is the power of the thought to get itself accepted in the competition of the market...."

–Oliver Wendell Holmes

But that means the thought has to make it into the market in the first place. And whether it gets that far often depends on the press.

Economics and business and taxation and energy were major issues in the last national election campaigns. The American people had to make political decisions based on their grasp of those issues—and the strength of that grasp depended in large measure on what they had been able to learn about those complex topics.

Take energy reporting, for example. Some of it is superb. But, as an oil company, we are occasionally astonished—and dismayed—to see or read a quick, shallow treatment in the news concerning energy matters of profound domestic or international significance.

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Saturday Review® MAY 1981

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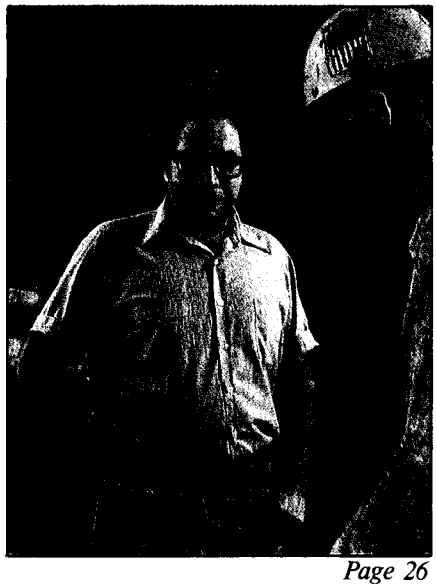

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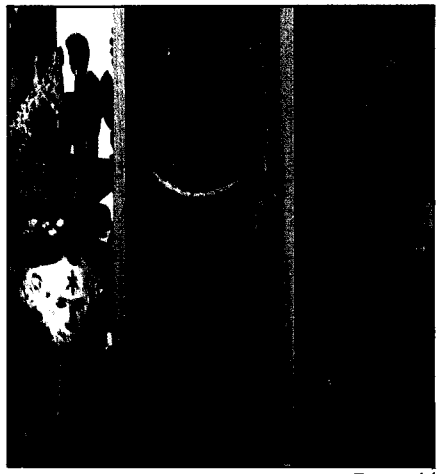

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HERE'S TO GUT FEELINGS AND THOSE WHO STILL FOLLOW THEM.

Ted "Captain Outrageous" Turner

Ted Turner does lots of things people advise him not to do. And he succeeds at them. He turned Atlanta's WTBS-TV into a "Superstation" using a communications satellite and recently founded Cable News Network, the world's first 24-hour TV news network. He bought the Atlanta Braves and moved them out of last place; won the 1977 America's Cup after being fired in the '74 races; and was named "Yachtsman of the Year" four times.

Ted Turner puts his feelings where his mouth is. He also puts a great scotch there: Cutty Sark. And while he's been called Captain Outrageous by some, one thing's sure: Ted Turner's enjoying himself.

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Best Sellers

As one of the "rare readers" who knows all five of the authors mentioned in your article "The World's Five Best-Selling Authors" [March], and as a reader of gothics since the early Sixties, I'd like to express an opinion as to why Janet Dailey is particularly popular. She is, as Scot Haller noted, one of the first Americans to write for this genre. The English and Commonwealth writers gave short shrift to Americans, whose portrayal was stereotyped and unimaginative. Her characters are more plausible than those of other writers published by Harlequin, and her digression from the pattern of chaste heroines makes her stories a bit more spicy.

Patricia K. Taylor
Sebring, Florida

Scot Haller's piece "The World's Five Best-Selling Authors" is interesting, but the appeal of Barbara Cartland has been incomprehensible to me ever since I got out of my teens and into the real world. Aside from the irritating, cutesie-coined names of her heroines and the odd descriptions of burgeoning sexual passion, I find most of the "simpler morality" exemplified in her novels dreary at best, horrifying at worst. In fact, when I read about her life, I was reminded of a character I'd read about somewhere before. I realized that it was Chaucer's Prioress, who professed great gentility, dressing in the height of glamorous fashion, cradling her lapdog and weeping over bleeding mice in traps ...and who nevertheless got her jollies from stories about little boys being cut up and thrown into wells.

Paula T. Steiner
Pasadena, Texas

Thank you a million times for your delightful article. Love,

Barbara Cartland
London, England

Notes on Bartók

One wonders why Mr. Wadsworth fails to credit Serge Koussevitzky with the commissioning of Bartók's *Concerto for Orchestra* [Basic Bartók, March], a fact well known to most music lovers. I have no quarrel with Szigeti—a magnificent violinist—or with Fritz Reiner—a first-rate conductor. No doubt they encouraged Bartók, but the actual commission came from Koussevitzky alone, for his Boston Symphony Orchestra.

Nancy Plummer Faxon
Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts

Stephen Wadsworth replies: I did not credit Szigeti and Reiner with the commissioning of Bartók's *Concerto*. I said that they "brought about the commission of the work," which is accurate. Aware of the composer's deep depression, ill health, and financial problems, they urged Koussevitzky to visit Bartók in a New York hospital with a commission. Koussevitzky, always eager to encourage living composers, obliged them, offering Bartók $1,000 for an orchestral work in memory of the late Mrs. Koussevitzky. Also aware that Bartók would refuse any offer motivated by charity, Reiner and Szigeti swore Koussevitzky to secrecy, and Bartók never knew where or how the commission actually originated.

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"It's the Governor returning your call."

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EDITORIAL

A Writer's Détente

At a recent meeting of leading American and Soviet writers at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles, E.L. Doctorow, author of *Loon Lake*, made some striking observations about what he considered to be the contrasting characteristics of the American and the Soviet novel.

Mr. Doctorow said that American writing tended to reflect the ironic; Russian writing, the epic. For example, in the treatment of war themes, writers like Norman Mailer, James Jones, and Joseph Heller dramatized the sordidness, absurdity, folly, and futility of national combat. The Russian novel, on the other hand, tended to treat the experience of war along more heroic lines. Mr. Doctorow said he could understand how a nation's history played a major role in shaping such attitudes. Certainly, the ordeal of the Russian people in the Second World War, with 20 million dead, was a crucible that affected the novelist no less than everyone else.

Soviet and American writers meeting at USC-Los Angeles.

Such an analysis seemed to the American writers at the conference table to be cogent and logical. The Soviet writers, however, doubted that it was possible to describe Soviet writing by any single term, even if only for the purpose of distinguishing it from the literature of other countries. Both at the conference table and in private discussions, they tried to impress on us the fact that their literature was so varied that any single characterization such as "epic" was largely inaccurate. We tried to point out that Mr. Doctorow was making no invidious statements; he was attempting to identify the general thrusts in the literature of the two societies.

Even this broadened interpretation failed to satisfy the Soviet writers. Most Americans, they said, formed their ideas of Russian writing largely on the basis of the Russian classics. Tolstoy was the grand master of this tradition but by no means its sole exemplar. They could therefore understand Mr. Doctorow's remarks, but they also hoped that the Americans would familiarize themselves with current Soviet writing so that they might appreciate its range and diversity.

In their further comments, it was apparent that they believed that their writers were quite adept at irony. If the essence of irony is the ability to deal with paradox without underlining, then they felt they were not without credentials in this respect. They indicated that they were highly practiced in the art of writing between the lines. As they spoke, the works of writers like Ehrenberg, Sholokov, Simenov—novelists who wrote about war—came to mind.

If the Russian writers took exception to American perceptions of Soviet literature, then it was equally true that the American writers have reacted against Soviet characterizations of our literature. At the first meeting between the two groups—there have been four so far since 1977—the Soviet writers called attention to what seemed to them to be the preoccupation of many American writers with the less attractive side of human behavior: glorification of brutality, depersonalization of sex, and the cheapening of life itself. It seemed to us that they had taken an unattractive fraction and were substituting it for the whole. (In retrospect, the similarities between their position and that of the Moral Majority may be readily observable.)

In any event, perhaps the most fascinating—and also useful—feature of the four meetings so far is the freedom with which both groups can exchange their perceptions of one another. Omnipresent in the minds of the writers is the fact that their societies are juxtaposed against each other on a nuclear stage. The fuse points of the explosives are in the mind and not just in the mechanisms. Imperfect communications, partial appraisals, rushes to judgment, all these can be lethal in situations where the margin for error approaches zero. That is why direct attempts to reduce faulty communications must be respected and encouraged. **—N.C.**

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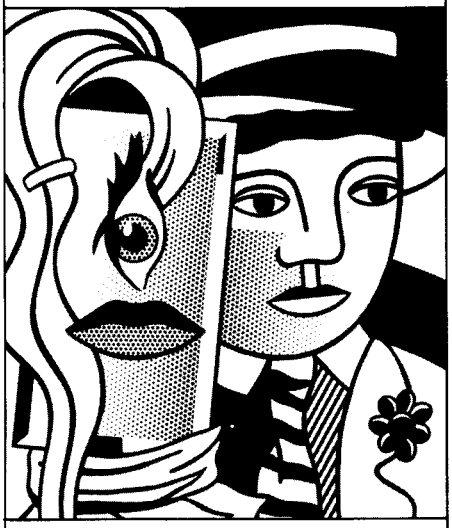
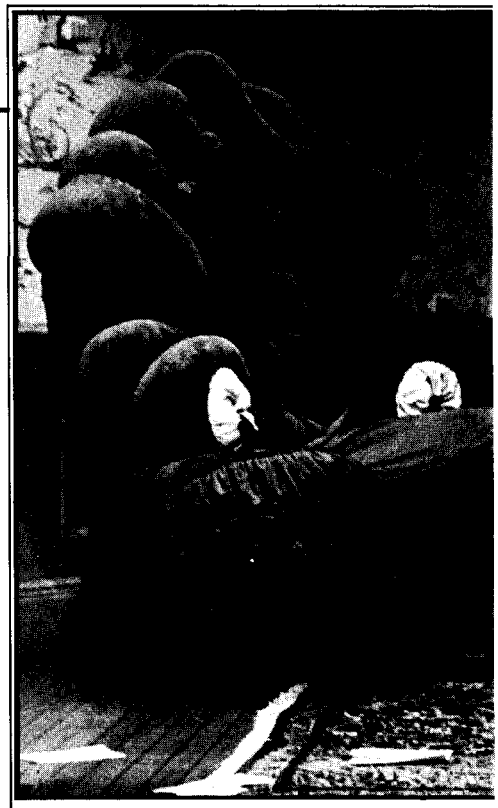
MAY SPOTLIGHTS

Art

The public will get a perfect opportunity to see a "blue-chip" revolutionary artist in action (see *SR*, April 1981, "The 'Art' of Chic.") when **Roy Lichtenstein**'s first major museum exhibition in more than a decade opens this month at the St. Louis Art Museum. Lichtenstein shocked the Sixties art world with his "comic strip" paintings and rose to prominence as a revolutionary Pop artist. He has since developed his style gradually within the strict limitations of his self-created genre, moving away from ironic images inspired by popular culture, more and more incorporating references to art history—Cubism, Futurism, Surrealism, Purism, Abstract Expressionism—all rendered in the by now comfortable newspaper comic-strip style: Instead of "I don't care! I'd rather sink than call Brad for help," Lichtenstein gives us Dali as he might appear in the *Daily News* funnies. From St. Louis the exhibition will move on to Seattle, New York, and Fort Worth. (St. Louis, May 8 through June 28.)



Lichtenstein's "Stepping Out" (1978).



George Balanchine's *L'Enfant et les Sortilèges* o

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Theater

As far as the media are concerned, the theatrical event of the season is Elizabeth Taylor's Broadway debut in Lillian Hellman's real mayonnaise, **The Little Foxes**. The Thirties drama about avaricious backstabbing in a viperous Southern family originally starred Tallulah Bankhead. At the new production's opening in Fort Lauderdale last February, co-star Maureen Stapleton received better reviews than Taylor, and the small possibility exists that the production may not reach the harsh critical glare of Broadway. Will it be an artistic triumph? Will it be an embarrassment? We're not gamblers. We only know that the journalistic ruckus the production will cause is likely to be inescapable. (Opens May 7.)

***The Little Foxes* (from left): Elizabeth Taylor, Anthony Zerbe, Joe Ponazecki.**

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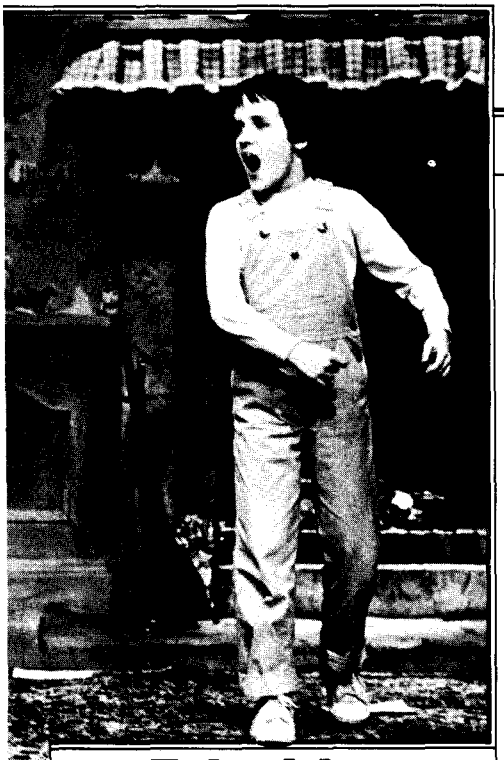

Television

For the first time George Balanchine has choreographed a work especially for TV: Ravel's *fantaisie lyrique,* **L'Enfant et les Sortilèges** (The Spellbound Child), set to Colette's text about a child's swirling nightmare of inanimate objects coming to life and fairy-tale creatures becoming reality. The work has eluded Balanchine's grasp three times before when he tried to set the unwieldy phantasmagoria for the stage—he choreographed the first production in 1925 for the Monte Carlo Opera (where he met the composer) and then twice again for the New York City Ballet in 1946 and 1975. This time around, however, Balanchine feels the medium of television will allow him to realize the ballet as he always envisioned it. Kermit Love, an associate of Jim Henson's who created Big Bird and other "Sesame Street" characters, has worked closely with the master choreographer and the New York City Ballet to bring *L'Enfant* to the screen. (PBS, May 25 at 8 P.M.)

Dance

The Aussies are about to emerge from down under with what advance word suggests is one of the more exciting dance troupes to hit the scene in a long time. The eagerly awaited **Sydney Dance Company** will make its American debut at New York's City Center this month, featuring seven original works by their 30-year-old artistic director, Graeme Murphy, and three other recent works by Australian choreographers. The troupe is bound to produce critical controversy with its shameless theatricality and a contemporary style of dance that doesn't fit neatly into categories. Ballet enthusiasts will likely call it modern dance; modern dance devotees, ballet. After New York, the company will take its bold repertoire to the Spoleto and Wolf Trap festivals. (New York City, May 27 through 31.)

BRANCO GAICA

A controversial Sydney Dance Company ballet offers Cupid on a skateboard.

CLIFFORD R. JONES

India's Kathakali dance-drama at Spoleto.

Festivals

With spring, **Spoleto U.S.A.** again comes to Charleston, S.C. This year, the 17-day festival of the arts features—along with much that is familiar, such as soprano Renata Scotto and the Los Angeles Philharmonic under Carlo Maria Giulini—several stateside rarities, including Kathakali, a dance-drama from India, and several American firsts: La Claca Theater Company of Catalonia, a mask-and-puppet troupe that works with Spanish painter Joan Miro; the Sydney Dance Company (see Dance Spotlight); and a new play by the always controversial Harold Pinter, *The Hothouse.*

Festival founder and artistic director Gian Carlo Menotti will celebrate his 70th birthday with productions of his opera *The Last Savage,* two gala performances of his choral works, and his play, *The Leper.* (May 22 to June 7.)

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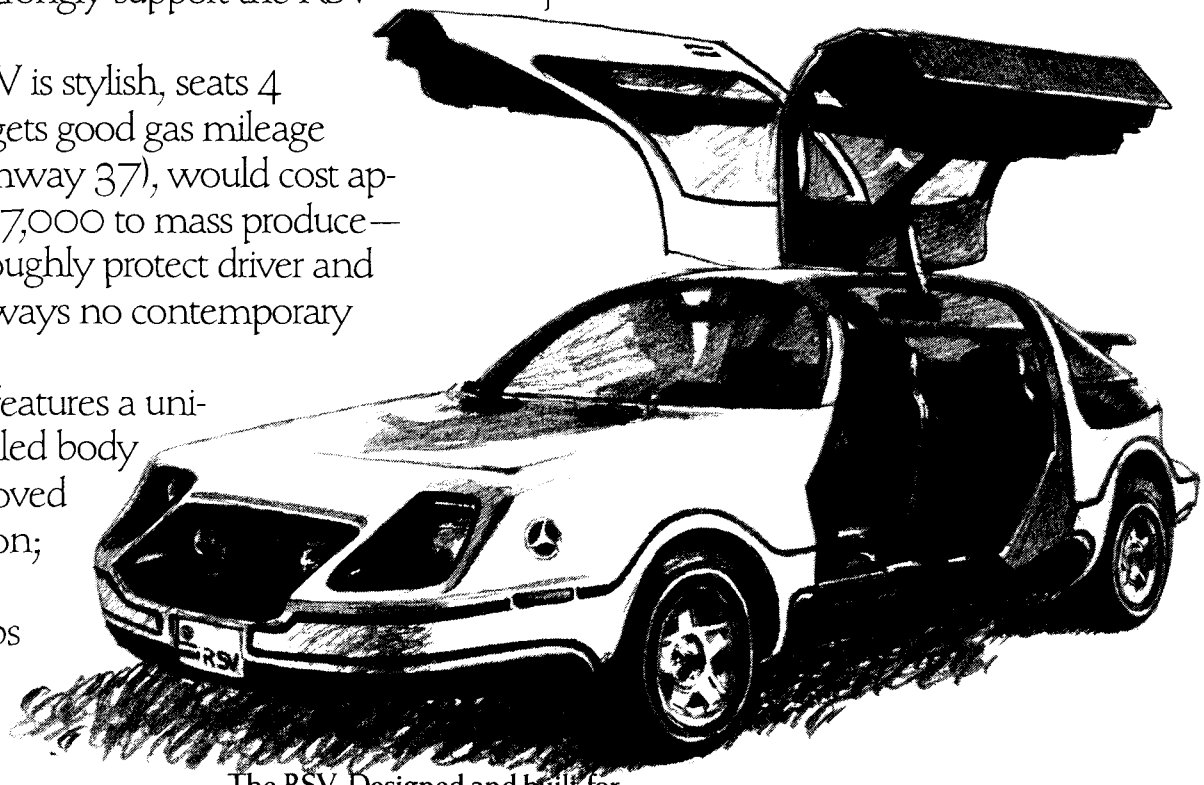

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Beverly Sills as Impresario

by Peter Andrews

For an opera singer, the ordeal of sweating out opening-night reviews, no matter how agonizing, has the virtue of being mercifully swift—whether or not it seems so at the time. The applause tells you something at the outset, and the first notices appear with the morning newspapers. Within a few days you know if you are a success or not. A new impresario, however, can be stretched on the rack for the better part of five years. An opera company is such an unwieldy creation that it takes that long to institute new policies and then see if they are working.

Beverly Sills, now two years into her five-year appointment as general director of the New York City Opera, is nearing the half-way point in the longest opening-night ordeal of her career. And the pressure is building. Although there are still holdovers from the Julius Rudel regime, the spring 1981 season of the City Opera is Sills's first real season on her own, and with each successive production the success or failure of the company will be Beverly Sills's success or failure.

To make matters more difficult, she is forced to undergo the strain of opening-night jitters in the middle of the star's spotlight. She cannot be like Sir Rudolf Bing, late of the Metropolitan Opera, who knifed his way through artistic waters with his emotions wrapped as tightly as his umbrella, and occasionally communicated with the public through crank press releases. She is "Bubbles," whom we all love having watched her on television, laughing with Johnny Carson, and talking just like anybody else. She is "our Beverly" who can be seen dashing around New York, raising funds, and fast becoming known as one of the most adept, most ferocious pan-handlers for the arts the city has ever known. She hits the talk-show circuit, makes personal appearances, signs autographs, and poses for gag photographs—anything that will humanize opera and extend it to the largest possible audience. All of this, on top of her duties as administrative director of an internationally esteemed but perpetually beleaguered opera house. She professes to love every minute of her double duty, and if she is feeling the strain, she isn't showing it—yet. But then, Beverly Sills is used to giving masterful public performances.

At the age of 51, Sills, like her friend Mikhail Baryshnikov of the American Ballet Theatre, is in the forefront of a performer-turned-producer syndrome. On the surface it makes sense. In these days of heightened media awareness, it helps to have an instantly recognizable figure as director. It opens doors and smooths the way for the vital task of shaking money out of the rich. But the track record of singers who become impresarios has been spotty at best. Connoisseurs of theatrical horror stories still shudder at tales of Mary Garden's direction of the Chicago Opera during the Twenties, in which the legendary soprano managed to lose more than $1 million in a single season, an extraordinary sum to kick away in those hard-currency days. In Sills's defense, it must be pointed out that, unlike Mary Garden, she is not trying to pursue an active singing career and be an impresario at the same time. "I haven't even sung in the bathroom since my retirement," she says. Additionally, Mary Garden, great soprano that she may have been, was not a tough-minded girl from Brooklyn who made her debut wearing a costume her mother had sewn for her. Mary Garden probably would not, as Beverly did last year, march down to City Hall and sweet talk the mayor into letting the opera house hook into the Power Authority of the State of New York to get her electricity bill cut by 20 percent. Sills knows how to count the pennies.

Still, the change of impresarios from conductor Julius Rudel—a veteran of 35 years with the City Opera—to "our Beverly" was far from comfortable. Both Sills and Rudel are old friends who go back to 1955, when Beverly was just signing on with the opera to play Rosalinda in *Die Fledermaus* for $75 per performance. Originally, Rudel was to stay on as principal conductor for one more year to help Sills wind up her own singing commitments and get settled into the director's chair. Suddenly, Rudel asked to be relieved of his duties and, reluctantly, Sills agreed.

"It was a difficult time for him, having to come to *me* for permission to hold extra rehearsals—a bewildering time," she recalls. "But that is not why he left. He had received offers from other orchestras, and he said to me, 'Beverly, you have to let me out. If I don't get started on my own conducting career now, I never will.' So I did."

Nevertheless, it is well known that Rudel and opera board chairman, John S. Samuels, tangled on a number of artistic and administrative issues. Rudel's resignation was accepted by the board with relish, and so far he has not been invited back.

Yet despite the tense transition, Sills had no difficulty taking over, even without Rudel's cooperation. "The admin-

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istrative part of the job is not something that concerns me," she says. "I helped run Wolf Trap, and God knows I am familiar with the operation of this place. I grew up here, and I know every light bulb in the house. Sure, I miss performing. I go on stage and see a chair and I think, 'Hey, that's *my* chair,' and I get a feeling I can't quite put my finger on. But it passes.

"I come from a long line of labor people. My grandfather was brought to America by Eugene V. Debs to help get children out of the sweatshops. My heart is always with the people in this company who do the work. I'm perfectly willing to 'interfere' with anything I think is wrong, but I don't try to turn everything into a Beverly Sills production. I never tell a singer to do it my way. I say, 'Let me help you give *your* performance.'"

Diana Soviero, a front-line soprano with the company for seven years, is typically enthusiastic about the new director. "Beverly is wonderful to work for. She's a demanding woman. She's been there and she knows the business. I wouldn't want to cross her—but the most important thing about her is that she cares about her singers."

As an administrator, Beverly Sills adheres to the ethic of nice—"I don't think you have to be a bastard to run an opera company," she says. "I try to accomplish as much as I can with a big grin." And grinning, she has moved decisively to assemble the staff she wants. Long-time technical director Hans Sondheimer was retired to consultant status and replaced by Gilbert Hemsley. Hemsley relit several of the productions and put a luminous shine on them. The lighting of the forest scene in Nicolai's *Merry Wives of Windsor* was a technical tour de force that drew a big hand the night it opened the new season. "Now," Sills notes with satisfaction, "I won't have to worry about the lighting for a while."

What did concern Sills during an interview in her office in the City Opera's catacomb basement, was the performance. *Merry Wives* was a personal selection of Sills's, and she hand-picked the young, vibrant cast to support veteran baritone William Wildermann in the comic role of John Falstaff. Inserted into the repertoire last year, it was conducted at a gallop by Rudel and became one of the smash hits of the season. But under the baton of Charles Wendelken-Wilson, the production

PHOTOS © HENRY GROSSMAN

was neat, laid back, and safe—the last things Sills wanted for an opening-night performance. "The ensemble singing worked beautifully," she said the next morning. "But the production was not a triumph. It lacked humor and spirit. We'll have to work on it."

Sills's dissatisfaction leads directly to the City Opera's most important problem area, and the one that has drawn the most criticism from within the company—insufficient on-stage rehearsal time for the singers. Sills came to her office pledging to increase the rehearsal schedules, which is the impresario's equivalent of a new president's vowing to make the federal bureaucracy more efficient, and just about as difficult to accomplish. It is axiomatic in opera that there is never enough rehearsal time, but at the New York City Opera sometimes there is no time at all. Lighting and technical rehearsals eat up an enormous amount of time on the company's only stage. Old productions being reinserted into the repertoire must give way to new productions being mounted for the first time.

As a result of this crunch, earlier in the season, while the company was rehearsing a new production of *Attila*, the cast of *La Boheme* was thrown on stage for their first performance of the season without any stage rehearsal at all. What should have been a dress run-through was offered as a finished production with unhappy results. A fine young cast with more than enough good voices to breathe life into the old war-horse was victimized by sloppy stagecraft, especially in the last act as the singers looked for their positions. After the first performance of the season, when the company needed rave reviews and had singers on stage who deserved them, it got a set of indifferent notices. Everyone in the company understands the limitation of stage availability for rehearsal time, but there is a feeling among some members of the company that "Beverly should be pushing harder on this."

Running the City Opera is like working an algebraic equation in which everything equals "x" and "x" *always* equals money. With money, perhaps the singers could be given the time they need to

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Top: Sills in her television gala, *Beverly!* (left); and overseeing an on-stage rehearsal (right). Below: Two impresarios, Julius Rudel and his successor (left); and Sills with husband Peter Greenough, at home but still at work (right).

prepare for performance. Eighty-five percent of the City Opera's operating budget of almost $15 million goes to salaries, and still there is only money enough to offer singers a top scale of $1,000 per performance, approximately one-fifteenth of what the major houses in Europe can offer.

"Money," says Sills, "is the only real problem I have. Or, at least, all the other problems I have can be solved with money. But I need money. Not so much to underwrite new productions. Every production I have scheduled for the next three years is already fully funded. It's relatively easy to get money for new productions or for something that gets the donor's name on the back of a seat. We run a $2-million-a-year deficit because of operating expenses. I need money for toilet paper, and washing machines, and all the boring things no one thinks about."

How is she going to get the money?

"I ask for it."

Sills is remarkably good at asking for money. Under her aegis, annual fund-raising levels have risen from $2 million to almost $6 million. Her televised *Beverly!* gala alone netted the company $1 million, and in the first three years since she has held an administrative position with the opera—she was named co-director in 1978—City Opera has surpassed its challenge grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities by as much as four to one. "Having lunch with Beverly Sills," says one petroleum company executive, "is the most expensive meal in New York. She tells you about how we have to do this for our children, and you give her a check, and then you remember you don't have any children."

"Without any question," says City Opera development director, Albert Hudes, "when it comes to raising money, Beverly is the best in the business—depending on her availability. The trouble for me is that she is not always available. If Beverly has the choice of wooing a potential donor or attending an important rehearsal, she will be at the rehearsal."

Given the company's money problems, Beverly Sills and the City Opera will rise or fall on the quality of its repertoire and the people they can get to perform in those operas. The City Opera sits literally in the shadow of the Metropolitan. It does not like to think of itself as the "second" opera house in New York, but it is. City Opera spends $175,000 to mount a production, and the Met spends an average of $500,000. Sills wants a $10 million endowment fund, and the Met is already embarked on a campaign for a $100 million fund. The City Opera scratches to find a promising young tenor, and the Met has Luciano Pavarotti.

To find its own place in the sun, the City Opera has to resort to guerrilla-war tactics, something it has often done with remarkable success—most notably in 1966 when Sills made her own first huge success in Handel's *Julius Caesar*. The City Opera took a $60,000 production and went up against the Met's $750,000 production of Samuel Barber's *Antony and Cleopatra*, starring Leontyne Price, which opened the new Metropolitan Opera House in Lincoln Center. *Cleopatra*, as John Mason Brown said of Tallulah Bankhead's version of Shakespeare's classic, "barged down the Nile and sank," while Beverly Sills became an international star.

Still, the Met keeps coming at you with big stars and lush productions. The City Opera has to counter with interesting programming and ensemble playing. Sills's first order of the day is to adjust the repertoire. There are several wonderful productions in the current schedule. *Les Pêcheurs de Perles* has such a charming production that the audience is almost convinced the opera works. Frank Corsaro's long-time production of *Madama Butterfly* still packs an emotional wallop and his *The Makropoulos Affair* is still *the* model for mixed-media opera productions. The new production of *Attila* is a real barn-burner and the surprise hit of the current spring season, selling to 90-95 percent capacity. In fact, under Sills, the entire repertory has been playing to 85 percent of capacity—up from 78 percent previously.

Nevertheless, there is some brush clearing to be done with the repertoire. The Ming Cho Lee sets for *Tales of Hoffmann* are a recurring embarrassment, and the City Opera seems to be suffering from a *Don Giovanni* jinx as well. The Corsaro-directed production of 1972 received perhaps the most consistently venomous set of reviews of any opera production in New York in the last 10 years. "A catalogue of horrors," was a typical notice at the time. A new

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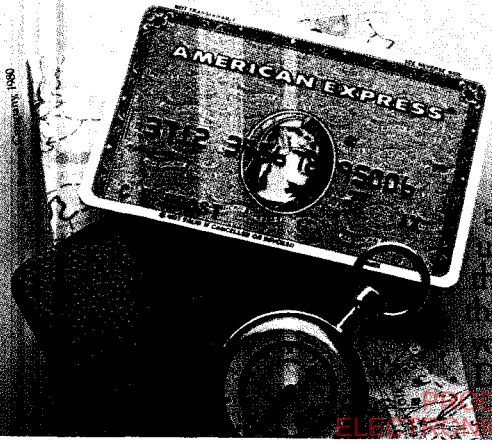

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production, directed by John Cox, premiered last March, receiving what could best be described as mixed reviews, although it prompted one critic to yearn for a return to the Corsaro version. Sills was just beginning her directorship, but she was able to make at least one important if negative contribution. "I heard the director was planning to have Don Giovanni appear nude. I called him and said, 'I don't even want to hear what your concept is, it will not be.'" The Cox direction was rejiggered during the fall season but with little effect.

A more short-lived failure was the New York premiere of Thea Musgrave's *Mary, Queen of Scots*. The production, imported from the Virginia Opera, was handsomely produced, and Ashley Putnam made a striking Queen Mary. But, as Donal Henahan of the *New York Times* pointed out, "The opera as a whole suffers from a lack of lyrical interest." Which is a very nice way of saying it does not contain much music worth singing. (For Irving Kolodin's assessment, see page 85.) The primary appeal for mounting this waxwork was that it was cheap and helped fill the City Opera's self-imposed mandate to bring contemporary works to New York.

Sills's approach to repertory-building will come into sharper focus in the seasons to follow, as she walks the artistic tightrope between the box-office operas she needs to pay the bills, and the kind of inventive programming that has, for so long, been the City Opera's trademark. She wants popular success, but it has to be the "right" kind of popular success. "We are going to stick to our guns," she says. "We will not fall back on 20 *Carmen*s a season to survive." Clearly, her soprano's heart is not at ease with a great deal of contemporary opera that is not pleasing to the voice. She would rather ransack the established operatic literature for overlooked treasures, and, if the success of *Attila* is any indication, she is finding them.

Sills is bursting with plans for new productions. This year's fall season will be preceded by three weeks of operettas: one week of the company's slick-as-a-college-yearbook edition of *The Student Prince*, and two weeks of a new production of *Song of Norway*. If they are successful, she expects to add an existing production of *Naughty Marietta* to build a nucleus for a full, two-month operetta festival every summer, starting in 1982.

On the heavier side, an early Verdi cycle will build on the triumphant *Attila* with *Nabucco* and *I Lombardi*. Meanwhile, a much-anticipated mini-baroque festival will bring together Gluck's *Alceste,* Handel's *Alcina*, and Rameau's *Dardanus*. New productions already scheduled through next year include such varied fare as *La Traviata*, *Candide*, *Hamlet*, *Love of Three Kings*, and an English-language *Der Freischutz*. They will be joining existing productions of *I Puritani*, *Rigoletto*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Medea*, *The Cunning Little Vixen*, and *Tosca*. Massenet's rarely heard *Cendrillon* will be heard with Frederica von Stade in 1983. Additionally, Sills is measuring Shostakovich's *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* for size, and discussing the possibility of a deal with the San Francisco Opera to bring in Rossini's *Semiramide*. The sheer breadth of the planned repertoire, its mining of obscure jewels, is astounding. No other opera house offers such a varied program.

She's gotten respectful reviews. But Sills doesn't want respect, she wants love.

Not surprisingly, Sills plans to make the City Opera a singers' house. It boasts a number of fine young ensemble singing actors, and the not-too-secret hope is that some of them will develop into major operatic stars who can attract their own followers, as Beverly Sills and Norman Treigle did. There are several who might break through. Barry McCauley is not the most polished actor in the world, but he cuts a fine figure, and his Nadir, in *Les Pêcheurs de Perles*, was a demonstration of French singing at its zenith. Alan Titus has been everyone's favorite utility baritone in light comedy roles, but his Marcello in *La Bohème* shows the beginnings of a serious dramatic artist. The bassos are well represented by Samuel Ramey and Justino Diaz.

And then, of course, there are the sopranos. Ashley Putnam is a beautiful woman, and when she departs *Mary, Queen of Scots* and sinks her teeth into the Mary of *Maria Stuarda*, she demonstrates a voice to match. Carol Vaness is an enchanting singer with the constitution of a horse, singing *Les Pêcheurs de Perles*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, and *La Bohème* in eight days. And for those of you who miss seeing Bubbles on the stage of the City Opera, there is Gianna Rolandi, who looks like Beverly, sounds rather like Beverly, and sometimes even sings with her hands in her pockets, which was one of Beverly's signatures. It is not easy to book many high-powered international stars on the City Opera's pinch-penny budgets, but the company has managed to lure Grace Bumbry with the plum parts of Abigaille in *Nabucco* for the fall 1981 season and the title role in *Medea* the following spring.

The final reviews of Beverly Sills's directorship must wait a bit. She has made some important administrative personnel changes but the problem of insufficient rehearsal time remains. Money is starting to roll in, even though the nagging problem of recurring debt plagues the opera house. Sills has proven to be an innovative builder of repertoire, and her new productions have been receiving respectful reviews. But Sills isn't satisfied. She doesn't want respect, she wants love. And she's well on her way to winning it all over again. Of course, as she counsels her young sopranos, pacing is extremely important in opera. Most of the heaviest bel canto singing comes in the last 20 minutes. Beverly Sills has a lot of fireworks planned for the second half of her term, and she always was a good finisher.

For now, she is adjusting to the change in roles from diva to director. The transition has had some unlooked-for effects. During a scouting tour of Germany last summer she found herself with John White, long-time musical director for the City Opera, in a country railway station waiting for a train, in the pelting, freezing rain.

"John," she asked, "when I was your most valuable singer, would you have let me stand out in the rain like this?"

"Are you crazy, Beverly? Of course not."

For Beverly Sills, America's favorite soprano, it was a chauffeured limousine purring quietly at the curb, and a towel for her throat. But Beverly Sills is management now. And for Madame Director, it is a long wait in the cold rain. ■

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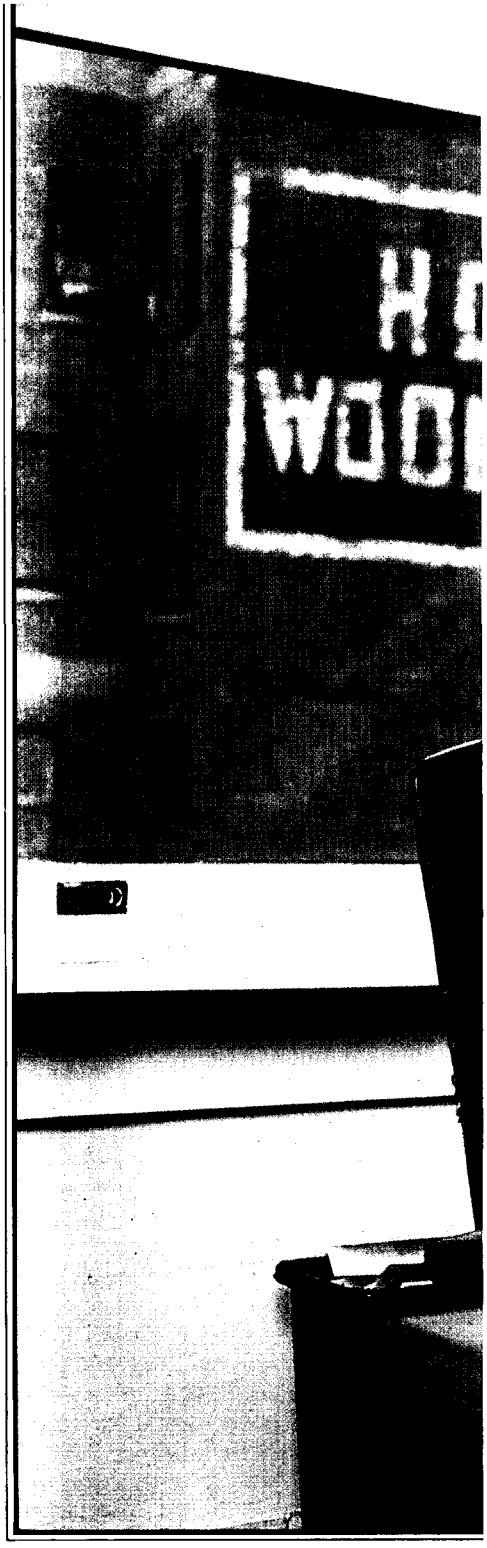
Paddy Chayefsky

The Agonies of a Screenwriter

by Robert F. Moss



FRANÇOIS BOTA

The advertising campaign for *Altered States*, Warner Bros.' high-voltage, high-decibel story of a scientist's experiments in genetic regression, presents its hero (William Hurt) hanging upside down in a sensory deprivation tank. As it happens, only one man associated with *Altered States* seems to have been truly turned upside down: screenwriter Paddy Chayefsky, three-time Academy Award winner (for *Marty*, *The Hospital*, and *Network*).

According to the credits, the screenplay for *Altered States* was written by Sidney Aaron, the pseudonym Chayefsky left behind when he took his name off. In adapting his 1978 novel for the movies, the author envisioned a hypnotic melodrama about the perils of scientific experimentation. But as executed by Ken Russell, who also directed such florid, orgiastic films as *Women in Love*, *Tommy*, and *Lisztomania*, Chayefsky's script became a sometimes silly, sometimes scary story that the author says he doesn't recognize. "He keeps the actors moving all the time," Chayefsky says. "You can't concentrate on what they're saying."

The physical production of *Altered States* irks its author, too. "Jesus," he thunders, "in the very first scene of the movie, our hero is supposed to be in complete sensory deprivation. Russell has him in an upright bronze boiler, dog-paddling around, and the whole thing is lit up like a Halloween scare. Meanwhile, there's all this narration about total silence, total deprivation, total darkness."

His disgust intensifies when he talks about the sequence in which the hero, employing the black magic of sensory deprivation and mind-altering drugs, reverts to a hairy protohuman, then escapes from the tank and dines on a sheep at the local zoo. Whatever claim the film had as a serious drama is forfeited with this conventional horror-film flourish. Chayefsky says that his screenplay called for the simian creature to be glimpsed only fleetingly, not caught in the full glare of arc lights and photographed from every angle. Always drawn to the stylized and impressionistic, Russell used dancer Miguel Godreau as a double for William Hurt in this sequence. "Up to that moment, the scene is completely realistic," declares Chayefsky. "The janitor hears something in the lab and creeps in to check. Then a ballet dancer suddenly jumps out of the tank doing a *grand jeté*. You're into *Planet of the Apes*!" According to Chayefsky: "The difference between my script and what Russell did with it is the difference between art and hyperbole."

This is not the old tale of the hapless scribe in imperial Hollywood, where writers have always

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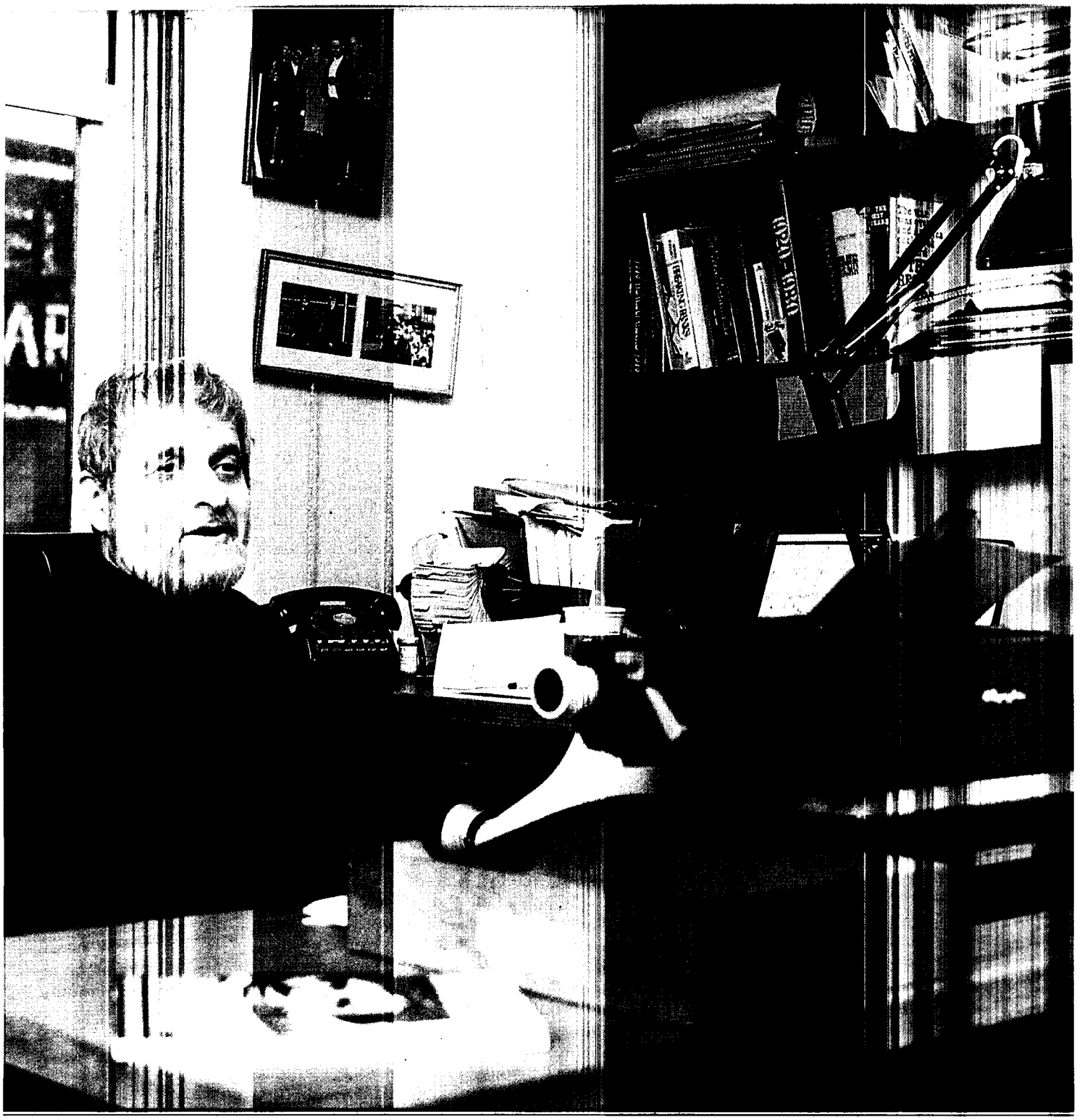

been well-paid minions of executive nobility. Within the hang-dog tribe of screenwriters, Paddy Chayefsky is the least likely casualty of artistic interference. After 27 years in the business, numerous awards, and the popular success of such idiosyncratic projects as *Network* (1976) and *The Hospital* (1971), he wields the kind of power that film-school students dream about. Probably only Neil Simon and William Goldman (*Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*) have similar clout. If Chayefsky can't get his script onto the screen as written, who can?

Screenwriters who aspire to total control of their script usually turn to directing. After writing *What's New, Pussycat?* for Clive Donner and *Casino Royale* for John Huston, Woody Allen directed his own script of *Take the Money and Run*. Others who have made the transition in recent years include Robert Benton (*Kramer vs. Kramer*), Michael Crichton (*Coma*), and Paul Schrader (*American Gigolo*). Why doesn't Chayefsky simply pull up a director's chair, too? "I don't want all that responsibility," he explains. In light of the *Altered States* controversy, his next comment is particularly ironic: "I need other people's perspectives."

Perhaps Chayefsky has not stepped into directing simply because it has never been necessary: He has always found other ways to maintain control over his scripts. Adapting his teleplay *Marty* into a feature film in 1954, Chayefsky dropped his price to $13,000 plus 5 percent of the profits to insure that no hands but his own would ever touch the property. Squeezed into a

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CHAYEFSKY: ***"The difference between my script and what Russell did with it is the difference between art and hyperbole."***

$500,000 budget, *Marty*, the spare, folksy story of a homely Bronx butcher who unexpectedly discovers romance, eventually grossed $4 million. At Academy Award time, it upstaged such gaudier competition as *Love Is a Many Splendored Thing* and *The Man With the Golden Arm* to bring Chayefsky his first Oscar.

For *The Hospital*, his pitch-black parody of modern medicine, Chayefsky received $100,000 and his company, Simcha Productions, got 50 percent of the net; for *Network*, his attack on television, $150,000 and Simcha 23 percent of the profits. This was relatively modest "up front" money for a writer of Chayefsky's stature—but it allowed him to maintain artistic control. Yet as the finances of filmmaking have changed—*Altered States* cost $15 million—so has Chayefsky's strategy. He says he took most of his money for *Altered States* "up front because filmmaking has become so expensive that the chance of any movie recouping its investment—at least to the point where people with percentages start getting paid—is getting smaller and smaller." Besides, given his track record, Chayefsky no longer needs to bargain for control.

Chayefsky also tries to work with the same coterie of creative personnel from film to film, thereby insuring that his voice will be heard. Arthur Hiller has directed two Chayefsky efforts: *The Americanization of Emily* (1964) and *The Hospital*. Howard Gottfried has produced *The Hospital*, *Network*, and *Altered States*. When working together on a film, Gottfried and Chayefsky usually drive to the studio together each morning, discussing every detail about the day's shooting.

Passionately involved in all aspects of the production, Chayefsky has opinions about everything from lighting and costumes to camera angles, and he is not bashful about communicating them. During the filming of *Marty*, he blocked director Delbert Mann's efforts to shoot the story like a "high-style Rosalind Russell picture" rather than the "grimy little story about the Bronx" that he had written. Where acting is concerned, Chayefsky has especially fervent ideas. "My biggest contribution is in explaining my humor to the actors," says Chayefsky and proceeds to reenact wickedly funny sequences from *The Hospital* and *Network*, describing how he molded the actor's delivery. "I often scare the hell out of actors," he says. "I think I traumatized Peter Finch on *Network*." Only once did this irresistible force meet an immovable thespian. "When we were doing *Hospital*, George C. Scott didn't want to hear from me," Chayefsky recollects. "He practically threw me out of his room, in fact. I wanted him to play the doctor as a comic figure, but he insisted on doing it straight. He gave a good performance anyway."

Director Arthur Hiller defends Chayefsky's unusually vocal involvement: "Paddy can be very argumentative, but basically I found him quite reasonable. Sometimes I'd have to resist his suggestions and do things my way and then later on he'd say I was right. Other times, quite frankly, I wish I'd done something his way." Sidney Lumet, the director of *Network*, concurs: "When people are incredibly good at their work, like Paddy, they expect everyone else to reach the same level. Actually, I found him a very helpful, unegotistical writer."

Ken Russell, however, has blamed the *Altered States* confrontations on Chayefsky's efforts to reign unchallenged over the entire production. "I don't think Paddy had ever been involved with a director who wasn't malleable," he has said. When Chayefsky attempted to counsel the actors, Russell was enraged at what he regarded as an invasion of his authority. After only a few days of filming, the director and screenwriter had clashed several times on the set.

Ironically, it was Chayefsky who with Gottfried had chosen Russell to direct this project. Because of Chayefsky's awesome track record, the studio had accorded him another privilege rare for a writer: director approval. Given the obvious incompatibility of temperaments, why did the screenwriter and producer approach Russell in the first place? "He was the last name on our list," says Chayefsky. "Everyone else had turned us down." Among those refusing the offer: Steven Spielberg, Lumet, and Hiller.

Chayefsky's contract also stipulates that none of his words can be changed without his consent. By the end of that

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tumultuous first week, it was clear that *Altered States* was in danger of self-destructing if Russell and Chayefsky continued to share the set. Their feuds threatened to prolong the shooting schedule and inflate an already expensive production. Dismissing the director would have shut down the film entirely—another option too expensive to consider seriously, even if another "satisfactory" director could be found.

So, realizing that his work would never be seen if he remained, Chayefsky retreated to New York, leaving a script that was apparently unloved by its director yet had the contractual status of sacred tablets. Faithful to the letter of the law, Russell did indeed retain Chayefsky's words. But his feverish direction encouraged the actors to recite their intricately worded lines like tongue twisters. Characters yell Chayefsky's speeches simultaneously, or they speak with food in their mouths. "I had the perfect contract," says the screenwriter, "and yet I got aced out of my own show."

As Chayefsky rails on about *Altered States*, the phone in his office starts to ring. On the line is an executive from a major Hollywood studio. He is calling to offer Chayefsky a six-figure deal to develop an idea the studio has come up with: the wars between Manhattan modeling agencies. The money is good. The subject is popular. The offer is declined. Chayefsky has had enough of Hollywood. For his next project, he will return to the theater for the first time in 13 years. He is working on a play inspired by the Alger Hiss case.

In person, Paddy Chayefsky seems as uniquely one-of-a-kind as his distinctive screenplays. Everything about his appearance seems defiantly unstylish. He goes to lunch at his favorite hangout, the Carnegie Deli on Seventh Avenue in Manhattan, wearing a pea jacket. With his black horn-rimmed glasses and neatly trimmed beard he looks like a cross between a philosophy professor and a stevedore: the Eric Hoffer of the entertainment business, aggressively down-to-earth. "Guy who worked for me once got so possessive, it was comical," he says. "I was like his pet celebrity. He'd bring people around to meet me—girls he wanted to impress and so forth. Christ, on a scale of celebrities from one to 10, I rank about three." Despite this disclaimer, his eyes dart around the room, picking out well-known faces—Bob Fosse, Ben Gazzara, Pete Hamill—each of whom gets a greeting. Watching Chayefsky hail his old friends, it's easy to see how he can evoke so effectively the aged-in-wood camaraderie of old colleagues in *Network*. He clearly thrives on ebullient fraternizing, whether at the Carnegie Deli or at his Central Park West apartment, which he shares with his wife of 32 years, Susan.

At five feet six inches, the exuberant Chayefsky is like a small, affable tornado. Born 58 years ago in New York City, he still retains a tough, Bronx-inflected speech: The Pelham Parkway express runs right through it. His energetic commentary, punctuated with pronouncements, obscenities, and opinions galore, encompasses everything from Shakespeare to burlesque routines. His characters are famous for their loquacity and it's easy to see where they get it.

Chayefsky began earning the respect of critics during the Fifties. At first, he wrote as a naturalist, mapping the folkways of lower middle class New Yorkers, cupping his ear to catch the unique flavor of their speech in *Marty* and in his play *The Middle of the Night* (1956). He later wrote slightly more avant-garde theater pieces, cultivating a mystical strain in *The Tenth Man* (1959) and in the biblical drama *Gideon* (1961). "I grew tired of being termed a 'wire-tap artist,' just listening in on life, so to speak," he says.

In his latest, finest incarnation, Chayefsky has been reborn as a surreal satirist. *The Hospital* features George C. Scott as a chief physician staggering under the weight of an incompetent medical facility. In *Network*, Peter Finch stars as Howard Beale, a Murrowesque newsman dueling with a soulless, conglomerate-brained television network. That script introduced a battle cry that has subsequently become part of the culture: "I'm mad as hell and I'm not going to take it anymore." In one memorable scene, New Yorkers all over the city open their windows and shout that warning en masse. Social satire has never been a rarer commodity in American films than today, and Chayefsky's Swiftian ferocity exhilarates audiences.

As a satirist, Chayefsky is no less fascinated by language than he was as a naturalist. He has given his movie creatures a new voice: an involuted, neo-Shavian speech. Conversations bloom with allusions, paradoxes, word play, and little sprigs of poetry. On occasion, Chayefsky's lines are windy and redundant but more often they put sinews of wit and literacy onto the flab of Hollywood dialogue. It is a rare pleasure to hear movie characters use words

RUSSELL: *"I don't think Paddy had ever been involved with a director who wasn't malleable."*

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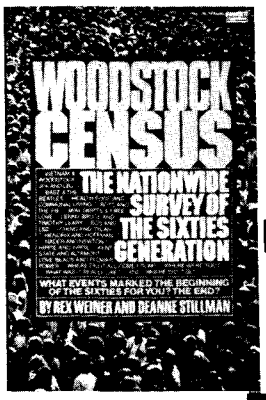

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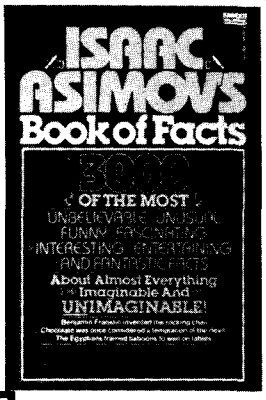

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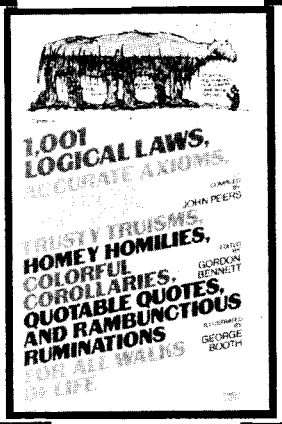

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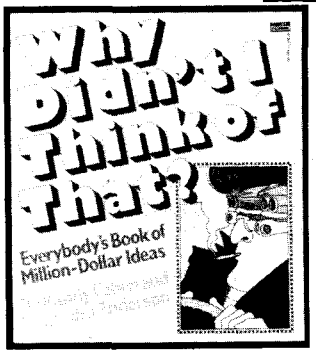

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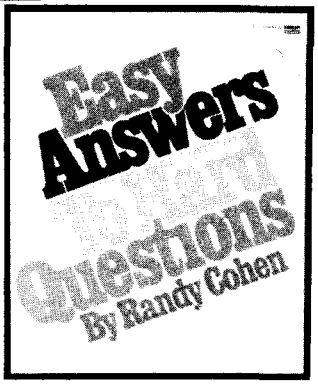

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like "unregenerate" and "piquant." What other screenwriter would have a doctor bellow about "the wounded madhouse of our times?"

Chayefsky's satires derive their credibility from surface accuracy. Having worked as a television writer during the medium's so-called Golden Age in the Fifties, Chayefsky was well schooled in network politics. For *The Hospital*, his research involved everything this side of attending medical school: "I read medical exposés and magazine articles by the truckload and hung around several hospitals soaking it all up. You know what? We got our best reviews in the medical journals. No kidding. I never met a doctor who didn't like the film. They said, 'At last someone has told the truth.'"

With or without Russell's tamperings, *Altered States* is still a child of Chayefsky's pen. Perhaps no horror story in history has been erected on such a detailed assemblage of scientific esoterica. The medico-academic community is represented by endocrinologists, geneticists, physiologists, each outfitted with the appropriate argot.

Like all his films, *Altered States* pits one man against an American institution. The David and Goliath story has clearly fascinated Chayefsky at least since *The Americanization of Emily*, in which his protagonist took on the entire U.S. Army. In subsequent skirmishes, Chayefsky's abrasive but idealistic heroes have battled the medical establishment in *The Hospital*, ratings-obsessed broadcasters in *Network*, and dehumanized science in *Altered States*. In these contests, David never defeats the giant. James Garner doesn't really sabotage the military in *The Americanization of Emily*. Despite his efforts, George C. Scott fails to alter the system in *The Hospital*. Peter Finch, as "the mad prophet of the airwaves," is ultimately murdered—on a live news program—by his own network.

In the case of *Altered States*, it is not the movie hero who ultimately succumbs to the power of the institution; it is Chayefsky. In a sense, the writer has become one of his own characters. He has battled another institution—Hollywood—and in doing so has not heeded his own wisdom. All his recent films have illustrated the folly of such one-sided warfare. With *Altered States*, Chayefsky has become his own mad prophet. ■

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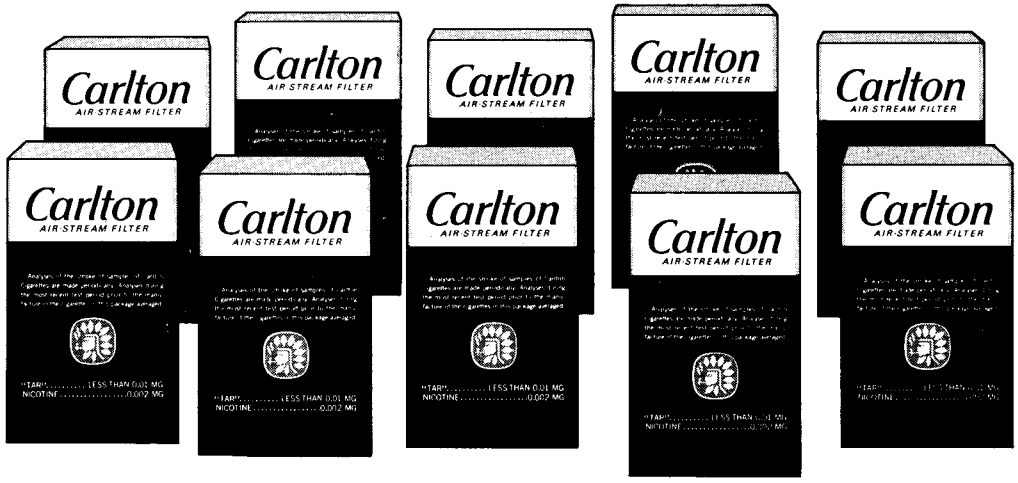

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George Segal

by Malcolm N. Carter

George Segal has come a long way from the New Jersey chicken farm that originally supported him, his wife, Helen, and their two children—but only symbolically. Though his works command six-figure prices, the sculptor and his wife still live on the same 11-acre farm about an hour's drive from New York City. The coop where hens used to roost, however, is now his studio.

Born in the Bronx 56 years ago, Segal had his first one-man show in 1956—as a painter—at the now defunct Hansa Gallery, an artists' cooperative in New York City. Among his early mentors were such Hansa regulars as Jean Follett and Richard Stankiewicz, in addition to Allan Kaprow, who is credited with having invented the modern "happening," and William Baziotes.

In 1959, Segal made the transition from painting to sculpture, creating three rough pieces to stand before figurative paintings that depicted the "Legend of Lot." Later, he experimented with coloring the previously white plaster figures that he cast from live models. He also refined his technique from "outside" to "inside" casting, permitting wrinkles and other details to emerge for the first time and endowing his work with a new delicacy.

With his sculptures now in the collections of the world's major art museums, George Segal numbers himself among the fortunate. "I've been luckier," he says, "than a lot of my contemporaries."

Q *Did you ever have any doubt about wanting to be an artist?*

A I always wanted to be an artist. But I had all kinds of misgivings and doubts. Number one, there was no economic history that you could make a living as an artist. All the odds were against it. I had no encouragement from my parents. Ultimately, the only real encouragement I had was from my wife, who was serene and cheerful about the fact that she thought I should be doing something that pleased me.

Q *But she was willing to sacrifice? You were a chicken farmer to support yourself for a while.*

A We were chicken farmers. We were too young and foolish and happy to feel that we were sacrificing. We didn't think we were. We thought we were enriching our lives. We had 5,000 hens who laid eggs. That's how we made our living. I fed the chickens and shoveled the chicken manure and collected the eggs; Helen graded the eggs and listened to detective stories on the radio while she was grading and counting eggs. I had a retail route where I sold eggs in New York. And we had kids; we were tied seven days a week to the farm, except that I was always rather bored by the idea simply of survival.

I had been interested in art since elementary school, majored in art in high school even though I was sent to a scientific high school—took one of those tests—I was supposed to become a something in scientific research. But I was a renegade: I liked art much better. And Helen was quite cheerful about it. She just intuitively understood that I would be very unhappy if I didn't have some kind of an outlet for my curiosity.

And my parents didn't think much of my being an artist. You know, everything in their past history put logic in their favor. They were flat-broke immigrants from Russia and Poland. There was no electricity or running water in the village they came from. They struggled from absolute scratch. My father ultimately built his own butcher shop business, later on sold that to become a farmer, and he was convinced that you had to survive by producing food, or handling food, because people would always need that. It was ironic that I started going bankrupt on a farm and simultaneously selling my art.

Q *Your wife has always played something of a crucial role in your art, hasn't she?*

A Yes, I would say so. Helen's about 110 percent feminine. She has never confessed the slightest quivering of wanting to make an artwork herself. She is serenely happy being a housewife and mother, but absolutely blunt in telling me her perceptions; she has an extremely accurate grasp of what goes on about her in the world, in the real world—irrepressible, honest, calls the shots, no baloney, has learned to absolutely trust her insights. She has a great effect on my thinking.

Q *Might an idea of hers develop into a sculpture?*

A No, she keeps hands off my specific projects. She helps me in the studio when I need four hands. She can anticipate what's going on. She intuitively reads me and my process very accurately.

Q *And when a work is completed, if she doesn't like it or has a comment to make about it, do you change it?*

A Sometimes I will, sometimes I won't. Sometimes I get stubborn.

Q *You went to art school, right?*

Segal and "The Steelmakers" (1980). "I must thoroughly respect the model."

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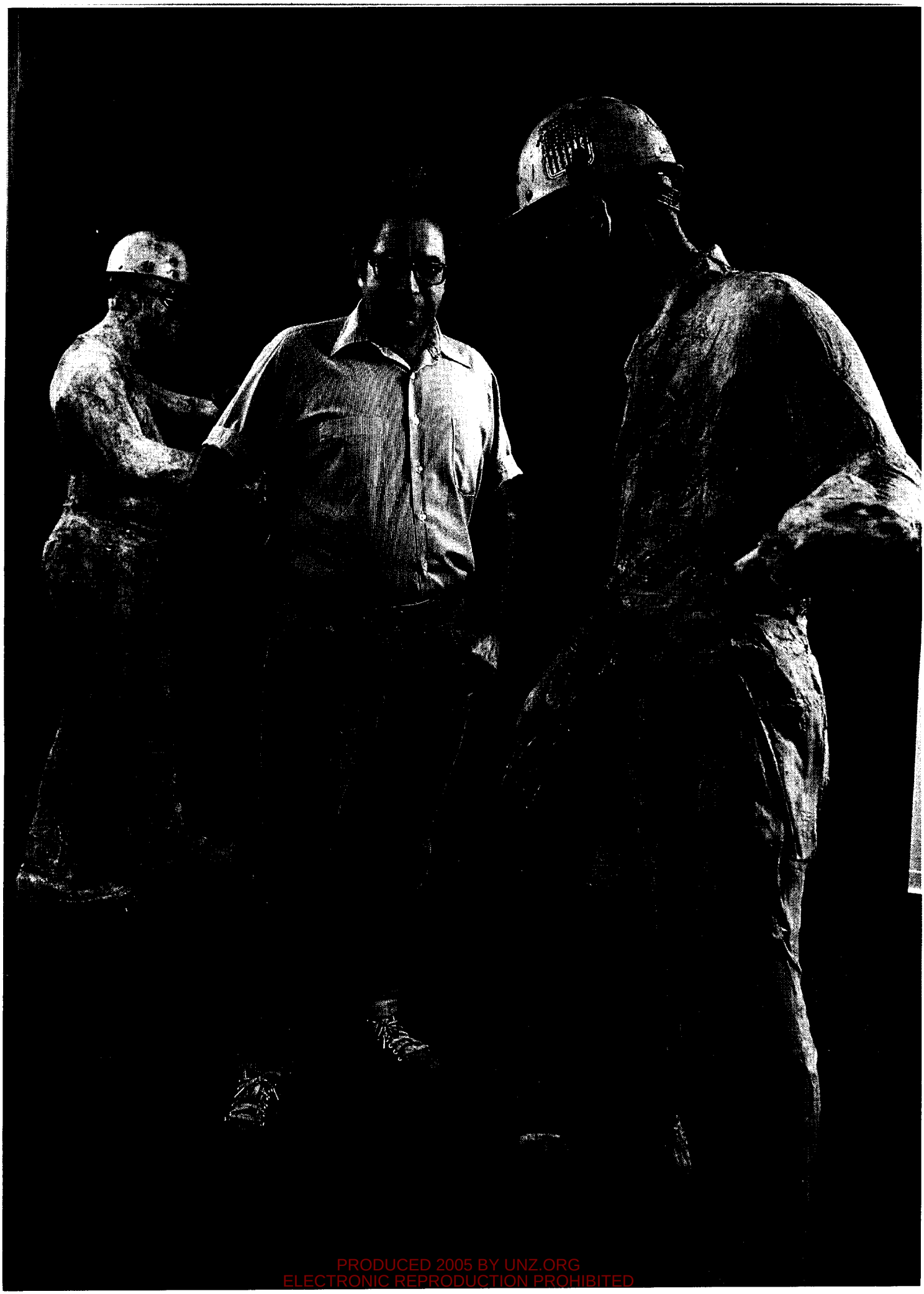

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A Many.

Q *Trying to learn how to paint?*

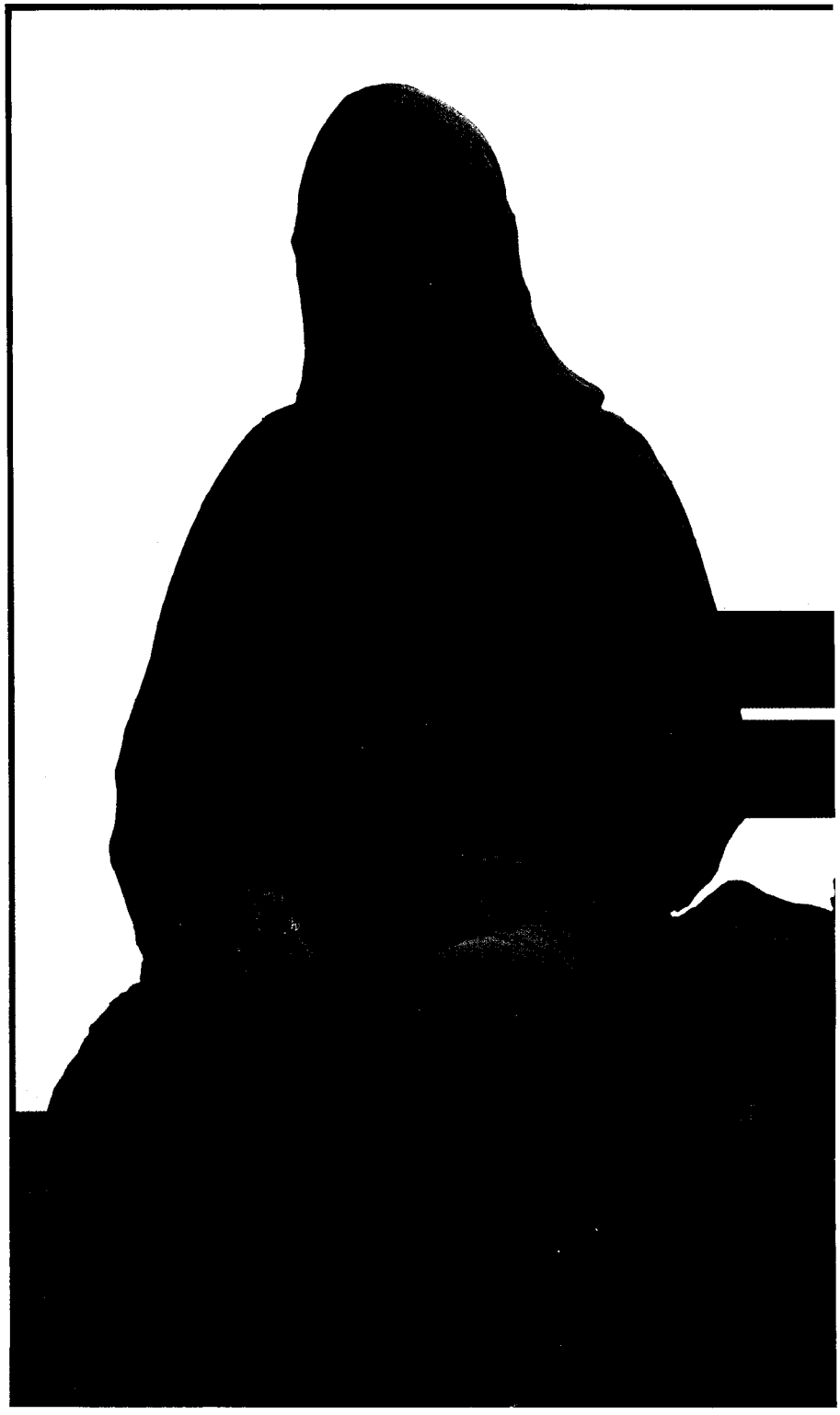
A It drove me crazy. I went to Cooper Union, to Pratt, to NYU, to Rutgers and always had a lot of trouble with my teachers. I would try to obey them and I would always find myself resisting the authority. I would always have these serious reservations. I would be enormously attracted to avant-garde theories, and then I'd say, my God, but you're not letting me deal with things that I could see with my eyes.

It could be that I came to school late: We were already married; I had worked on my father's farm; it was after the war; we were planning to have kids as soon as I graduated; there were no job openings available. Times were still pretty bad. You were dumb to major in art. In fact, I majored in art teaching. Couldn't even get a job teaching after I graduated anyway.

Q *Was this education useful?*

A I think it was very useful because it was delightfully self-indulgent to be able to think about philosophy, when everything was a grind about survival, and delightfully self-indulgent to think about art and ideas and religious illuminations and all the nonuseful, nonfunctional ideas in the school of Paris and especially New York painting.

The aura I got from the Abstract Expressionist painters was the hope that American painting could challenge and possibly surpass the school of Paris. That's Picasso, Matisse, Cézanne, van Gogh, and company—staggering achievement, the world's measure of great art. And these New York upstarts were insisting that here was a new impulse that could touch spontaneity, it could be rhythm, movements, it could be abstract, it could be very large canvases. It could be radical, but by some kind of magic and connection with surrealist ideas, by some kind of connection with difficult, profound ideas that were learned from Europe, Americans for the first time in history could stop being provincial and could deal in religious illumination. They could be anti-materialist, they could be soaring, they could put their finger on the rhythm of the universe, and it was an achievement and accomplishment that had nothing to do with making a lot of money, becoming comfortable or surrounding yourself



with cars and objects. But it had to do with an exalted state of mind. That was the ambition, I think, or that's the way I received the message. I was instantly enormously attracted to that.

But my teachers told me to wipe out my thinking and be spontaneous, work from your gut, buy five-inch house painter's brushes, vigorously erase anything that looked like figuration. If I decided to paint realistic illusionist painting, I would be going backward into Renaissance ideas, and I would be throwing away my very high regard for the paint and the rhythms together with all this smell of place, the smell of object. If I was obedient, I had to wipe out figuration and I didn't want to. I couldn't bring myself to be obedient. I had to change mediums. And I decided if I couldn't make a canvas be an illusion into deep space, the only space I could deal with was a space between me and the canvas; it was literally the space between me and the wall.

New York painters were hot on the trail of Abstract Expressionist greatness, and I found myself in the terrible

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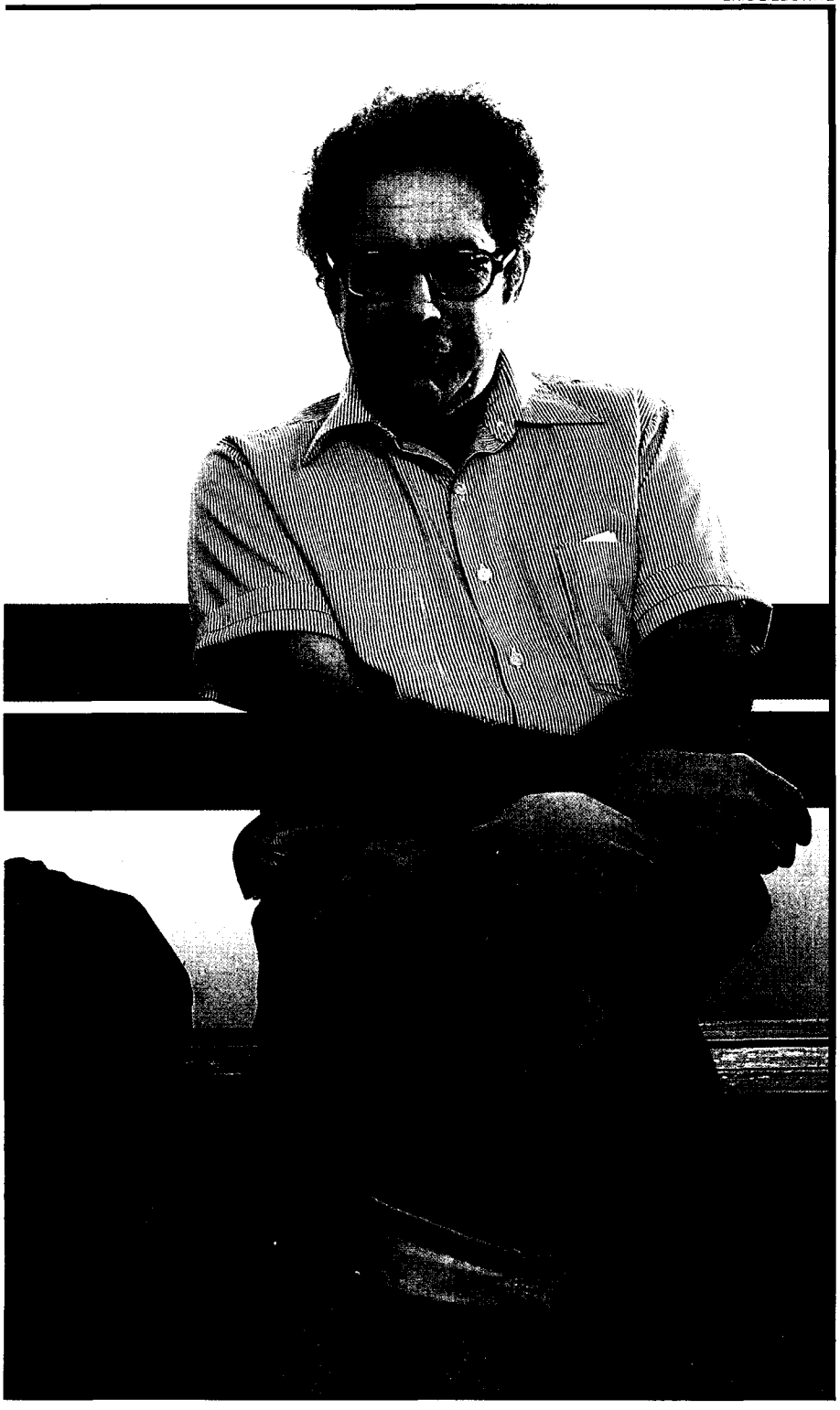
ERIC LIEBOWITZ



Segal with "Blue Girl on Park Bench" (1980). "I try to wipe out my own ego to let the model be herself."

position of loving it, admiring it, and then denying it. For instance, at one point I was asked to throw away literary subject matter. I have a great respect for literary subject matter. I have an equal respect for pure form, but I don't think that art is only about art. Haven't thought so for a long time.

Q *What do you think art is about besides art?*

A Like everybody's work, my own work is about my own mental state. And that's a mix between a lot of levels of feeling and a lot of thinking. It's very hard work to be able to put a fraction of your experience into the work.

Q *Do you believe that your experience is something to which many people can relate?*

A I believe that I'm pretty much the same human being as everybody else in the world, that I'm not terribly special. I'm trapped by time, things that have happened to me, I'm not responsible for my own nature, and I'm forced—I'm not in control of my destiny. I think in those ways I'm very similar to you and to everybody else I've met.

Q *Why did you suddenly begin using color?*

A I had just started working in bronze and discovered that I didn't like the classical finish on bronze, the black-brown shine. Plaster is white, ephemeral, and catches light in a peculiar weightless way—the bronze looked like it weighed 10,000 tons. I was absolutely shocked by the transformation. Here I was making all these white sculptures, and I said let's see what happens if I make a sculpture darker. I wasn't even thinking in terms of color, just making it darker. And then I started to put some color on the white plaster and was astounded to discover how extraordinary it was in receiving the paint. Then I used the brightest colors I could, and you start saying, well, what else can you do? Then transparent stains—extraordinary. And so every time I touched a piece of plaster with color, I was changing a whole expressive character of the piece. Astounding.

A lot of my friends hated it. They said, "My God, you can't abandon the white." They were all upset because I was changing the work. But I continued the color in spite of my friends' loud, agonized objections.

Q *In 1971, you shifted to inside casting from outside casting. How did that happen?*

A In my usual perverse fashion I was asking myself questions. I got interested in looking at small parts of the body. I was looking sideways at people next to me, and I was looking at skin texture around their knuckles; it's, I suppose, the same thing if you look through a camera viewfinder and you're trying to deal with a close-up. That's what I was doing: I was taking very close-up looks at people next to me, and I decided I was going to try to make sculptures out of those fragments. I simply felt that if I was looking that closely, I needed fine detail. Maybe it's because I'm nearsighted. The solution was simple: I just cast on the inside.

Q *Let's talk about one of your most*

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recent pieces that has caused public controversy, "Gay Liberation."

A Outdoor public sculpture is a new occupation for me. It only began for me about two and a half years ago. I've done maybe 300 private sculptures, and I've done maybe four public sculptures. Five maybe. This is brand new. So the offers have come from different sources. And I've said no to some and yes to others. The gay-liberation sculpture was commissioned for Greenwich Village by the same foundation that commissioned me to make the Kent State piece, the Mildred Andrews Fund. I thought the Kent State piece was worth doing. I chose not to illustrate the shooting of a college student by National Guardsmen but rather to make a sculptural image of a metaphor of Abraham and Isaac.

I found that sculpture interesting to do because I could deal with a literary metaphor. I could deal with poetry. I could deal with very complex layers of interpretation of what seemed to be a loud, blunt, clear political event that I thought was far more complicated than it appeared on the surface. So for better or worse, I'm trying to maintain the privacy of my sculpture in these public jobs. It's only occasional commissions that are loaded with dangerous subject matter.

Q *Once they came to you with the request for a piece on gay liberation, how did you decide what to do? Did something occur to you right away?*

A Well, no. I really had to think about it. Intellectually I couldn't turn it down, even though the reaction—well, obviously, I spent a great many years in the art world. And again, obviously, there are a large number of gay people whom I've known for years whose work I respect enormously, whose opinions I respect. Some are in the closet, some are in the open; some were offended by the idea of making public their private life. I rather respect that. I could have turned down the project, but I felt I had no firm intellectual ground for saying no to it. So I decided to do it, knowing there would be some kind of flak.

Q *How did you arrive at the idea of a bench, with two people sitting on it, two people standing in front of it?*

A My research consisted of taking a walk through Greenwich Village with Helen.

Q *It's not an abstraction then, it's your replication of a real event. The process of creation, as far as you're concerned, is literally to go out into the world to look for an idea.*

A Exactly. It's rushing in. You know, like having to survive. Having to deliberate. Having to walk the streets. Having to do all the work. All those things. Many artists complain, they want to be locked in an ivory tower. I think I get stimulated by being out in the real world.

When I was a painter, I couldn't bring myself to be obedient to my teachers. I had to change mediums.

Q *Do you ever feel that you're at a loss for an idea?*

A Unfortunately I've never had that problem because I have a backlog of ideas I haven't yet had a chance to get to.

Q *When you are about to create a work of art, do you have a clear vision of what you're going to do?*

A Not all that clear. I have to start with an image in my head, yes. And I have to start with an impulse. But then I try to wipe out my own ego, compare it to a model, to allow the model to be himself or herself in the situation. Maybe I can be lucky enough to get a gesture or a turn or a collection of movements that will reveal something deep about their attitude toward: what? Toward eating an ice cream cone or toward having an orgasm in bed. If I can wipe out my opinion and give my model the lead or somehow thoroughly respect the model—there has to be a certain compassion or even approval: Here's a fellow human being just as cracked as I am—maybe it's like that.

Q *It sounds like heresy. Rather than the ego dictating the work, the ego allows external events to dictate the work.*

A I almost went bankrupt on my farm, I mentioned that. And I never felt in control of whether I made money on the farm or not. So very early I got the sense of not being in charge of my own destiny.

Q *Why have you never moved away from your chicken farm?*

A Well, my own perversity. I can't be without New York, but I must have a private, quiet place. I have to be insulated against the nonstop static of the city. And yet I can't imagine myself without the museums, without the galleries, without the art mags, without the criticism and without the mental life. I'm in New York City in an hour. Just close enough so I can come home at night.

Q *When you go to a show and you see something that stimulates you, does it have a direct impact on what you do in the studio?*

A It doesn't work like that. I think the real world provokes my sculptures, not art works.

Q *There are days when you aren't in your studio.*

A That's right.

Q *How do you get yourself into the studio one day and not another?*

A I have this feeling that everything that happens is part of a whole continuum, Helen calls me a workaholic; I'm in the studio more often than not. If I have to go to New York to install a show, that's all part of the continuum. If I'm struggling to pull all the threads together, I can't even despise putting a wedge under a figure or sweeping the floor. I've spent too many years shoveling chicken manure to despise physical work. And there's a calmness that happens when you do a lot of physical work. We have to be fluid physically and we need the peace that comes from exertion. We also have to be excited, stimulated mentally. I just figure I'm lucky because I can satisfy all these hungers, physical and mental, in my occupation. ■

Malcolm N. Carter, a staff writer at *Money* magazine, writes frequently about the art world.

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Broadway
The Great Red Way

by Michael Sivy

Broadway, the press has been trumpeting, is prospering as never before. Attendance for the current season is running 24 percent ahead of last year's figures, while box-office receipts are up 39 percent. Moreover, last season's grosses reached a record high of $143 million. Business around Times Square looks more successful than it has in decades.

But, as ever, Broadway remains a mistress of illusion. Beneath the glitter and the opulence lies a grim economic reality: The Great White Way faces a financial crisis that is not only revolutionizing the very nature of the business, but also sapping whatever artistic originality and vitality the Broadway stage could boast.

Take *Sweeney Todd*. The grim musical about a murderous London barber opened March 1, 1979, mostly to laudatory reviews. It won eight Tonys as well as the Drama Critics Circle Award for "the best musical of the season." It played for 15 months, closing June 29, 1980, in a theater that could take in more than $250,000 per week if every ticket were sold full-price to every performance.

Yet to merely earn its weekly running costs on Broadway, *Sweeney Todd* had to sell, at full-price, 69 percent of its tickets to every performance. The costs of opening the show, in other words, could only be recouped when more than 69 percent of the tickets were sold.

And, in fact, the $1.5 million production was able to return to the original backers only 35 percent of their investment when *Sweeney Todd* closed. By the end of 1980, royalties from London and touring productions had earned investors another 5 percent, but total recoupment (forget profit) may never be achieved. *Sweeney Todd*, in other words, was a critical success and a financial disaster.

It is still true, of course, that hit shows, carefully produced, return staggering profits. But the penalties for failure — in fact, for anything less than a runaway blockbuster — are increasing dismayingly. The cost of mounting even a nonmusical play has soared as high as $2 million, as in the case of *Frankenstein*, which closed on opening night this season. The unprecedented expense of keeping a show running has turned every production into an all-or-nothing proposition. Gone is the modest success of 20 years ago and the producer who turned out a new show or two every season.

In many instances, this oldtime producer has been replaced by neophytes who are caught up in a mad scramble for financing and who realize that they may have only one shot at success. Understandably, they are loath to risk their all on anything but a sure-fire hit.

Of course, when Chrysler can drop $1.7 billion in a single year, the theater's losses seem paltry by comparison. In fact, Broadway may well be America's smallest industry. The yearly revenues of all the shows on Broadway combined barely equal those of one small- to medium-sized industrial company. And an entire Broadway season could be financed with the money Hollywood wagered last year on just one feature film *Heaven's Gate*.

Nonetheless, while the stakes are small by corporate standards, they are staggering for the individuals involved. Traditionally, Broadway shows have been financed by producers and by "angels" — private investors who put money (seldom more than a few thousand dollars each) into theatrical productions. A hit can return 10, 20, 50, or even 100 times its initial investment; a failure is likely to be utter and complete.

Definite profit and (mostly) loss figures are impossible to come by because of the fragmentation of the industry, but some indication of the problem can be gleaned from reports put out by the office of the Attorney General of the State of New York, with which many Broadway shows (those raising money from the general public) are required to register. The Broadway shows reporting to the Attorney General both new productions and those continuing from previous seasons showed a combined loss of $2.2 million in the 1978-79 season. Last season, losses widened five and one half times to a whopping $11.8 million on invest-

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ments of $38 million.

In 1978-79, shows from prior seasons showed a profit of $3.3 million. In 1979-80, they showed a *loss* of $3.6 million. In short, not only was 40 percent of the money publicly invested in Broadway an immediate write-off during the 1979-80 season but, taken together, even those shows from earlier years that enjoyed some sort of a run—including hits—couldn't make money.

As for the shows that are not required to report to the Attorney General's office, Hobe Morrison, dean of theater reporters at *Variety*, a trade newspaper that keeps tabs on Broadway's successes and failures, says, "I doubt that they do that much better than those in the Attorney General's report." And the 1979-80 season would seem to confirm Morrison's view. Two of the three shows that reported a profit during the 1979-80 season itself—*Evita*, *Romantic Comedy*, and *Sugar Babies*—had filed with the Attorney General's office. Of the nine current shows that have turned a profit, according to *Variety*'s estimates, five had filed. Even if privately produced shows do slightly better, merely breaking even would be a triumph; for them to make up for the losses on twice as many publicly financed shows is scarcely credible.

Why do producers continue to produce and angels continue to support a money-losing industry? First, out of love. Both producers and angels adore the glamorous image—and sometimes even the art—of the theater. Second, even though shows lose money during their run on Broadway, most hits (perhaps one show in 10) continue to pay back through touring companies, record sales, royalties on amateur and regional productions, and possibly even a movie sale long after their Broadway profits—and sometimes even losses—are behind them.

Like so many other Broadway shows, *Sweeney Todd* was undone by its immense production costs. Like everything else, the theater has been brutally battered by inflation. Says a prominent general manager: "What we are selling is handcrafted from beginning to end—and labor costs have gone up thunderously. In addition, we've been struck by a series of fantastic increases in everything from advertising to electricity."

Not only do soaring costs increase the short-term losses of the Broadway theater, they also increase the length of time needed for a successful show to recover its costs. And as costs escalate, the small investors who have long provided much of the financing for Broadway can neither afford to take the risks involved in a production, nor can they afford to wait out the longer payback period. As one general manager puts it: "People who used to invest $1,000 get more prudent when the numbers reach five figures."

Such prudence is perfectly justified. As demoralizing as the statistics on Broadway productions appear, they actually understate the case. Money also disappears in shows that never even make it to opening night on Broadway. For example, 21 productions that had filed with the Attorney General's office were withdrawn last season because they couldn't raise enough money to go into rehearsal. While these productions have to return the money that was raised to the original investors, the "seed money" that was spent (to option a play, perhaps engage a director or a star, pay for legal work, and cover the cost of stumping up the full budget) is gone. Seed money for a straight play might run $30,000 to $50,000, and for a musical $50,000 to $100,000.

Broadway's reported losses widened 5½ times last season—but that understates the case!

The plays withdrawn from the Attorney General's office probably represent a loss of from $600,000 to more than $1 million—and there is no way of knowing how many other plays in development are spending without making it to the point of filing.

Says Roslyn M. Lipps, editor of *The Theatrical Calendar*, a publication that tracks both current and proposed Broadway productions: "Of perhaps 200 productions listed in *The Theatrical Calendar* each year, only one in five will actually open. And every production listed means that somewhere out there, somebody is raising money." Lipps estimates that a show that is listed has probably spent at least $20,000 already. The 160 shows that don't make it would therefore represent a total loss of over $3 million.

Seeking to hedge their bets, Broadway producers are increasingly gambling on only "proven" successes, such as revivals or shows that have gotten good reviews elsewhere: off-Broadway, off-off-Broadway, in regional theaters, or in London. A true estimate of Broadway's losses, therefore, must include money spent on projects around the world initiated in the specific hope of attracting Broadway producers. Last season, losses off-Broadway alone totaled $2.5 million. Theater, in short—even Broadway—pays its own way far less often than most theatergoers imagine. Moreover, at the present rate of inflation, current production costs will double in less than a decade.

From an artistic point of view, the most serious casualty of all this has been the oldtime Broadway producer. Since the turn of the century through the early Sixties, Broadway shows were mounted by professional producers who developed and financed their own properties and maintained a cohesive staff. On the staff was a general manager who handled the technical and business aspects of the production.

During the Sixties, these professional producers began to disappear from the theater. David Merrick is still able to conceive and produce a show like *42nd Street* in the traditional fashion—but it is the first original production he has generated since *Mack and Mabel* in 1974. Harold Prince hasn't produced anything since *Pacific Overtures* five years ago. As the oldtime producer vanished from the scene, former in-house general managers went independent. Anyone who could produce the financing for a show could call himself a producer and hire a general manager to actually run things.

The precise relationship between the producer and the general manager today is not a subject that anyone on Broadway is eager to discuss. Says one general manager who prefers to remain anonymous: "The technology involved in producing a play—from computer-operated dimmer boards to new methods of shipping scenery—has changed unbelievably. New producers who haven't been in the field don't understand these changes." They need general managers to tell them, step by step, what to do.

As a result, producers have been removed from the realities of their productions. And it shows. "There's some-

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thing distinctive about a real producer," declares Ernest Martin, who—together with his partner Cy Feuer—produced 11 Broadway shows, including *Guys and Dolls* and *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*. "If you look at productions today, you see people with no experience coming in just because they can raise the money. Then they turn the production over to a general manager."

The difficulty is that the successful oldtime producers were both theatrical visionaries *and* show-biz pragmatists. Today's newcomers often envision only the legendary profits of a huge hit—and they must work with general managers whose function is to applaud the vision but to stay practical.

Broadway's current economics would daunt even an autocrat of 20 years ago. (Indeed, many veterans have sought less perilous pastures: Roger L. Stevens—who produced *West Side Story*, *Tea and Sympathy*, *Mary, Mary*—is now producing under the auspices of the nonprofit Kennedy Center in Washington, and Feuer and Martin run the nonprofit Los Angeles Civic Light Opera.) But the current crop of producers forges ahead.

To reduce the risks, producers have turned to two-character or even one-character shows with a single set, thereby saving money but severely limiting the rich interplay of forces and personalities that is central to good drama. Or they have tried to find presold hits, by reviving classic musicals and mounting plays by famous playwrights—even if the plays themselves are wanting, as with last year's *Clothes for a Summer Hotel*, by Tennessee Williams. But most serious of all, producers have pinned their hopes on shows with the potential to develop a cult following, the sort of appeal that is believed to have made *Grease* into the biggest success in Broadway history.

While these tactics may make sense in the short run, they offer no long-term solution to Broadway's flagging fortunes. "There's been a spate of revivals in the past few years because some people think they're safer," says Roger Stevens. "But the real problem is a definite lack of new plays."

New plays used to be cultivated by producers who were guided by a theatrical vision, who understood that good theater is, almost by definition, venturesome and risk-taking. The new crop of Broadway producers can't afford risks, and the "sure thing" is, likewise by definition, comfortably predictable—and empty of artistic excitement.

Is Broadway therefore consigned to a future of tedious two-character dialogues, endless revivals, and gaudy cult productions? Perhaps not. Producers may soon find that audiences will not sit still for play after play offering only the monotony of two characters conversing. Nor will people pay exorbitant ticket prices for special effects and mindless extravaganzas, when movies can offer the same effects better at a fraction of the cost.

This is not to sound the hoary and always premature lament that Broadway is dying—a prediction made repeatedly since the 19th century. This is only to say that as producers turn increasingly timid and "practical-minded" in the face of inexorably escalating gambles, theater on Broadway will inevitably suffer.

Still, if the need to hedge a gamble means that theatrical daring can only take place in nonprofit regional theaters, then perhaps Broadway's salvation lies in their future potential. (The Shubert Organization, which owns half the theaters on Broadway, contributes heavily to such enterprises.) Granted, as a source of inspiration, regional theater isn't always infallible: "Pre-sold" regional hits often prove more disappointing than rewarding when placed beside the competition, as Christopher Durang's *History of the American Film* and Preston Jones's *Texas Trilogy* each proved in recent seasons.

But important plays (even serious ones) are nearly always imported to New York by theater-loving producers who assume that the whole world shares their love. And despite all odds, one can still hope that audiences, who are willingly paying more than ever before to attend New York shows, may even see good, stimulating, risk-taking theater on Broadway. But the likelihood is getting slimmer every season. ■

Michael Sivy is a financial writer with a special interest in the arts.

COMING CLICHÉS

Broadway producers, as the accompanying article explains, can't find the financial backing for theatrical originality (assuming any of them are trying). So most are out raising money for proven "sure things." Currently, producers are trying to mount the following can't-miss projects:

Believing that shows aimed at black audiences have been profitable (e.g., *Your Arms Too Short to Box With God*, *Ain't Misbehavin'*, etc.), producers are planning musicals based on the lives of Jackie Robinson, Louis Armstrong, Ethel Waters, Bill "Bojangles" Robinson, George Washington Carver, and the Harlem Globetrotters.

Since *Annie* has proven a phenomenal success, shows are being planned around orphans (*Orphan Train*, about a pack of orphans making their way in the Old West), around familiar children's stories (*Charlotte's Web*), and around cartoon characters (Blondie and Dennis the Menace). Of course, years ago, there was a middlingly successful musical called *L'il Abner*. A producer is trying to revive it.

As always, musical versions are planned of previously successful plays and movies: *Merrily We Roll Along*, *Sunset Boulevard*, *Stage Door*, *Sayonara*, *Harvey*, *The Front Page*, and *Laura*—as well as (from TV) *The Duchess of Duke Street* and (from the current hit) *Mornings at Seven*.

Ironically, *Sweeney Todd* was a financial disappointment—but a critical success. And since the show proved you could get good reviews for a musical about an historic British murderer, someone is planning a musical about Jack the Ripper. If that seems too close to *Sweeney*, try changing locales: Someone else plans a musical about Al Capone.

And what season would be complete without shows about show business? (No matter that Broadway currently offers *A Chorus Line*, *A Day in Hollywood/A Night in the Ukraine*, *Barnum*, *42nd Street*, *Piaf*, and *They're Playing Our Song*, since they're all hits.) In the works—in addition to those show-biz-based productions cited above—are dramatic biographies of Marilyn Monroe and Jeanne Eagles as well as a play called *Automatic Pilot* about a stand-up comedienne. There are also projected musical biographies of Al Jolson, Jimmy Durante, the Shuberts, the Little Rascals; something called *The Last Minstrel Show*; something else called *Brassy* about a contemporary singer/composer; and yet another musical about theater people called *Prizes*. Finally, there's a project titled *A Very Honorable Guy*, based on a Damon Runyon story about a Broadway hustler in love with a show girl. Naturally. Wasn't *Guys and Dolls* one of the great, all-time blockbusters?

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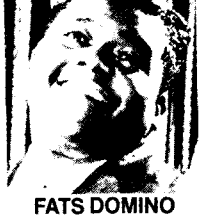
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Italian drummers in Edinburgh's Parliament Square at festival time.

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Edinburgh, the once and future capital of Scotland, is the sleeping beauty of Europe's historic cities. Untouched by the Luftwaffe and relatively unscathed by postwar redevelopers, it lays claim to the largest and handsomest concentration of 18th-century architecture in the world: literally miles of unsullied Georgian streets, squares, circuses, and crescents set on a slope commanding splendid vistas over the Firth of Forth. Despite such enticements, however, the city lies well off the usual tourist tracks and—for 49 weeks of the year—attracts far fewer visitors than it deserves.

Then for three weeks beginning in mid-August, the world suddenly beats a path to Edinburgh's door. Overnight the place runs amok in an orgy of music, dance, theater, exhibitions, movies, poetry readings, and indeed anything and everything related to the arts. This nonstop cultural saturnalia, which in 1981 runs from August 16 to September 5, is the Edinburgh Festival, founded just after the war and now the biggest arts bash in the world.

One says *the* festival, though in fact that is merely a convenient shorthand to denote four concurrent enterprises: the Edinburgh International Festival, the Fringe, the Film Festival, and the Military Tattoo. Much of the spice and variety at Edinburgh are provided by the three ancillary festivals, but the vital generating force behind this three-week extravaganza comes from the "official" International Festival itself.

It originated as the brainchild of Sir Rudolf Bing, later to preside for 22 seasons as general manager of the Metropolitan Opera in New York. Bing had cut his managerial teeth at the Glyndebourne Festival in the late Thirties, running that mandarin establishment with elegant authority until the outbreak of war sidelined him for the duration into a London department store. In 1945, with Europe at peace again, he conceived of establishing a major new arts festival in Britain. It was to be a gesture of cultural defiance in a world made weary by war, and as a by-product it would provide a home away from home for the Glyndebourne Opera. Casting about for a likely venue, he settled on Edinburgh. "The city," he wrote in *5,000 Nights at the Opera*, "was a little big for a festival, but it had beauty and tradition, a native culture, enough theaters, including one that could (just barely) be an opera house, good rail connections, and a number of hotels." It also had the rare distinction of being intact after six years of war.

Neither the time nor the place seemed exactly propitious. Britain was at the nadir of its postwar misery, with food and clothing still severely rationed, and precious little to show for having "won" the war. Edinburgh itself appeared to be a bizarre choice for a cultural festival, having the reputation of a provincial backwater notable for its previous niggardly support of the arts. Nevertheless, despite such ill omens, the new festival got off the ground in August 1947 with a roar of success.

The emphasis that first year was primarily on music, and on musicians remembered from before the war: Artur Schnabel, Joseph Szigeti, Elisabeth Schumann, Bruno Walter—the latter reunited with his beloved Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra for the first time since 1938. The Glyndebourne Opera was on hand to perform Mozart's *Figaro* and Verdi's *Macbeth*, Sadler's Wells Ballet brought its now-legendary *Sleeping Beauty* (with Margot Fonteyn and Frederick Ashton as principal dancers and Constant Lambert in the pit), while theatergoers could choose from fare both native and imported: Old Vic productions of *Richard II* (with Alec Guinness) and *The Taming of the Shrew*; Louis Jouvet productions (direct from the Théâtre de L'Athenée in Paris) of Molière's *L'École des femmes* and Giraudoux's *Ondine*. For E.M. Forster the festival was "a light in the world's darkness," and so it must have seemed to all those who made their way to Edinburgh for that first cultural banquet.

Scotland's nonstop cultural saturnalia is now the world's biggest arts bash.

Since then the festival has continued to follow a similar pattern and a similar timetable—a lavish three-week binge from mid-August to early September—though its scope and emphasis have varied according to economic conditions and the predilections of its directors. To date there have been six: Bing, Ian Hunter, Robert Ponsonby (now the BBC's controller of music), Lord Harewood (first cousin to the Queen and present director of English National Opera), Peter Diamand, and the current incumbent, John Drummond. It was Hunter who introduced the visual arts as an essential component of the festival with a series of shows devoted to the likes of Rembrandt, Renoir, Cézanne, and Gauguin.

Since the accession of John Drummond as director in 1979, there has been a noticeable change of course. Partly from economic necessity and partly from conviction, the emphasis on opera has been diminished. Even more significantly, the focus of attention has been shifted away from Europe. Historically, Edinburgh had turned to its near neighbors on the continent—France, the Low Countries, Germany, Scandinavia—for much of its cultural sustenance. Drummond is now setting his sights farther afield. Last year's festival concentrated on performers and exhibitors from the Commonwealth countries. This year the focus is on the United States. Thus the chief exhibition in 1981 is of paintings by American Abstract Expressionists from the Museum of Modern Art in New York, including a number of Jackson Pollocks never shown in public before, while the main dance attraction this year is the San Francisco Ballet on its first visit to Western Europe. It will perform in a "new" Edinburgh theater, the Playhouse, an abandoned cinema from the Twenties that was rescued from the bulldozers earlier this year to give the city a desperately needed large auditorium. Canongate Church, a lovely 17th-century chapel on the Royal Mile, is another new festival venue. It will be used for several concerts of music from the Stuart court.

At the King's Theatre (which, as Bing rightly observed, just barely qualified for opera) the Cologne Opera will perform Mozart's *La Clemenza di Tito* (in a much-praised production by Jean-Pierre Ponnelle) and Rossini's *Barber of Seville*. The Usher Hall, a traditional

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19th-century auditorium with notably fine acoustics, will be the scene of nightly concerts by the leading British orchestras, including the BBC Symphony under Gennadi Rozhdestvensky, and two imported ones: that of the Norddeutscher Rundfunk under its regular conductor Klaus Tennstedt, and the Polish Chamber Orchestra led by Jerzy Maksymiuk. The festival will open with a performance of Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*, performed by the London Symphony Orchestra under Claudio Abbado, with soloists Margaret Price, Jessye Norman, Peter Schreier, and Hermann Prey. Other musicians appearing in concert will include Yehudi Menuhin, Vladimir Ashkenazy, and Maurizio Pollini.

At the Lyceum Theatre, a superbly restored Victorian structure redolent of red plush and brass trim, the National Theatre from London will give the world premiere of Tom Stoppard's new play *On the Razzle*. And in the neo-Gothic Assembly Hall another repertory company will play throughout the season, including a *Cyrano de Bergerac* with Derek Jacobi, best known in the U.S. for his performances on PBS in *I, Claudius* and *Hamlet*.

Stoppard and Jacobi provide a convenient transition to the Festival Fringe, for both first appeared at Edinburgh as part of the unofficial sideshow—Jacobi in 1958 as a very young Hamlet in a production by the Players of Leyton; Stoppard in 1966 for the world premiere of *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* by the Oxford Theatre Group. The Fringe, in fact if not in name, dates from the festival's first year, when eight amateur or semi-professional theater groups turned up to put on performances as an unscheduled lagniappe to the official program. One was a production of *Everyman* at Dunfermline Abbey, of which a critic remarked that it was a shame the show remained so far out "on the fringe of the festival." The characterization stuck, and soon the Fringe had its own program and its own box office.

Since then hundreds of aspiring theater groups, dance and mime companies, playwrights, poets, and musicians have had their hours on the stage. Along the way the Fringe has launched some impressive careers. Maggie Smith first came to public attention in a 1953 revue called *Cakes and Ale*. A few years later some antic satirists from Oxford and Cambridge descended on the Fringe. Four of them—Peter Cook, Dudley Moore, Jonathan Miller, and Alan Bennett—were co-opted in 1960 by the official festival to give a show aptly titled *Beyond the Fringe*.

Festival events are traditional and formal as well as impromptu and avant-garde. H

But to pick out these few names from the past 34 years of Fringe participants is akin to reeling off the glamour stocks that one could have bought years ago at a fraction of their current price. The odds of discovering another Stoppard are not very good. The Fringe is open to any group or any individual willing to pay the modest fee for inclusion in the program. No screening process sifts out the chaff. Last year 391 companies jostled for space and attention during the festival's three weeks. The majority were theater groups—including a dozen from the United States—but musicians, dancers, mimes, puppeteers, painters, and sculptors were also there in force. Obviously, much of the fare on view is jejune and lacking professional polish. But for all that, the Fringe does provide a salutary counterbalance to the predominantly mainstream culture at the official festival. Visitors flock to the Fringe (last year 392,000 tickets were sold) in search of stimulation and the off chance that they may happen upon a new superstar.

By assiduously making the rounds of events, both official and Fringe, a festival freak could be on the go without respite from midmorning until well past midnight for 21 days running, but in the process he would be missing one of the Edinburgh Festival's prime attractions: Edinburgh itself. It is, in Robert Louis Stevenson's description, "a precipitous city." Wherever you look there are hills. And towering above all is the medieval Old Town, dramatically silhouetted against the south.

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V. PROFY / SHOSTAL ASSOCIATES

mal dancers attract onlookers.

Until the end of the 18th century, the Old Town encompassed all of Edinburgh. The city's total population lived upon this narrow strip of rock running from the Castle downhill along the Royal Mile to Holyrood Palace. The Castle—like most such edifices—looks most impressive at a distance, particularly after nightfall, when its floodlit battlements seem to float in the surrounding blackness.

Just beyond the Castle Esplanade (scene of the Military Tattoo at festival time) there begins the Royal Mile, that narrow thoroughfare along which so much of Scotland's history has taken place. On either side rise the celebrated—some would say infamous—tenements, some as much as eight stories tall, where aristocrats, literary lights, indigent clerks, and washerwomen lived cheek by jowl in democratic if unwholesome propinquity. Plumbing was nonexistent, and the cry of "gardy loo" (*gardez l'eau*) set off a mad dash for cover to avoid the slops raining down from on high. One of these tenements, Gladstone's Land, dating from the 16th and 17th centuries, has been refurnished as it might have been some three centuries ago. Behind it is a court surrounded by similar structures.

The gem of Edinburgh, however, is the New Town, begun toward the end of the 18th century when the old tenements could no longer accommodate the city's expanding population. Over the course of some 75 years, Edinburgh's New Town grew into one of the world's most harmonious cityscapes. It's still there, most of it intact and lovingly tended. To be sure, Princes' Street is much altered, its original residences long since replaced by commercial buildings—hotels, banks, shops—dating from the Victorian period and later. But the setting itself is so grand, the views so spectacular, that architectural anomalies hardly matter. Beyond Princes' Street, Edinburgh slips comfortably into the past. A few steps to the north lies Charlotte Square, a pristine embodiment of Georgian sobriety. Here, behind a classic facade designed by Robert Adam, the National Trust has restored and refurnished a house in representative late-18th-century style.

The New Town is best seen on foot, though admittedly there's a lot of ground to cover—about 125 acres in all. Behind Charlotte Square is Moray (pronounced Murray) Place, where grand colonnaded mansions surround a circular wooded park. From here it's an easy walk to Royal Circus and thence down to the "village" of Stockbridge, with its rows of unblemished Georgian shopfronts. Alternatively, one can walk along handsome Heriot Row, glancing at No. 17 where Robert Louis Stevenson lived, and then on to Drummond Place, where Compton Mackenzie held court in a house (No. 31) filled with 12,000 books.

From the start, Edinburgh's citizens have had the wit and determination to cherish the New Town as if it were a priceless and precious work of art—which indeed it is. I can think of few experiences more soothing to the soul than to walk aimlessly along its classically proportioned streets. The inner lanes and back alleys where Edinburgh's servant class once resided are now the happy hunting grounds of collectors of antiques and curios. St. Stephen Street is well endowed with shops dealing in such arcane merchandise as ancient microscopes, brass stereopticons, flintlock pistols, and vintage phonographs. Bibliophiles will enjoy browsing in the city's many second-hand bookshops. Perhaps the grandest of these is R. and J. Balding Ltd., at 81 Great King Street, run by two expatriate Americans.

After the good news, a smattering of bad. Edinburgh is not well endowed with hotels. The principal establishments are two Victorian piles at either end of Princes' Street. Both have been modernized with a singular want of grace or style, and both charge outrageous tariffs for what they offer. Residents of Edinburgh speak highly of the Albany and the Howard, each discreetly situated behind Georgian facades in the New Town, but they are small hotels and likely to be sold out at festival time. To help visitors find lodgings, the city runs a Tourist Accommodation Service (9 Cockburn Street, Edinburgh EH1 1BP) which for a $1.00 fee will make advance reservations at hotels, guest houses, or private homes. Festival director John Drummond strongly recommends staying at private homes. "It's far the best way," he says, "of getting to meet the locals—well worth sometimes having to share a bath." I would add one prerequisite: Wherever you stay, hotel or private home, make certain that it is within easy walking distance of festival events.

It's also difficult to work up great enthusiasm for Edinburgh's culinary delights. One can eat well there but not magnificently. Fish fresh from the North Sea is always a safe bet, and there are several restaurants—for example, Mermans on Eyre Place or Cousteaus on Hanover Street—that cope quite creditably with the local salmon, sole, and scallops. Drinking is another matter altogether. Edinburgh's port of Leith is the chief shipping point for Scotch whiskey, and the array of unblended malts in the city's better bars and pubs will gladden the most exigent connoisseur.

All in all, weighing up the pros and cons, it's evident that when Rudolf Bing chose Edinburgh for what would become the world's biggest arts festival, he picked a winner. ■

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Africa in Greenwich Village

by Avis Berman

Artists, by their very nature, often notice the value and beauty of things other people find coarse or trivial. American painters and sculptors, for example, were the first collectors of Shaker furniture and anonymous folk portraits, cherishing and preserving them long before museums and everyone else caught on. Taking the aesthetic of castoffs several steps further, Duchamp, Schwitters, Nevelson, and Rauschenberg—to note just a famous few—made names for themselves by celebrating the hand-me-down and the ready-made.

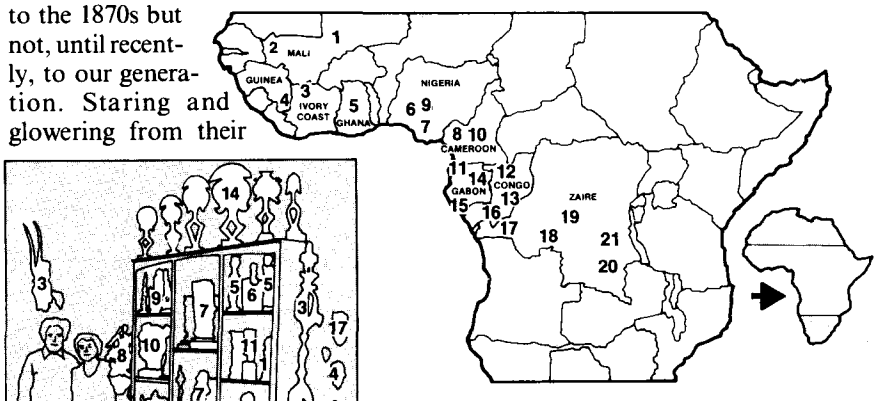
The felicitous instinct for seeing nobility in what more narrow-minded souls classify as unfashionable leftovers or quaint debris is nowhere more apparent than in the treasure-filled Manhattan town house of Chaim and Renee Gross. In their long, sunlit living room, canvases by once-ignored American painters hang above carved marble-top tables and plump, tufted loveseats dear to the 1870s but not, until recently, to our generation. Staring and glowering from their perches in nearby alcoves and cases are rows of what used to be considered ethnographic artifacts. Now these African and Oceanic masks, statues, boxes, and decorated tools are universally recognized for what they are: powerful, sophisticated sculpture of the highest order. A lustrous ebony mask from antiquity anticipates the elegance of Brancusi's planes and modeling; in the flat face and vigorously simplified features of an Ashanti figure it is possible to find much of Picasso.

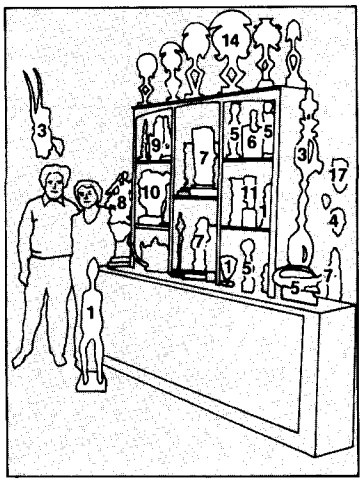
Chaim and Renee Gross believe that an empty wall is a dead wall. Accordingly, their walls are saturated with life. Every available expanse is packed with art and artifacts (even a corner near the kitchen has its cache of Ashanti combs), and they delight in skillfully shoehorning it all in. This warm jumble of precious objects radiates both prodigality and intimacy. The far-flung variety of periods, styles, and nationalities makes for a friendly, comfortable place, a peaceable kingdom where the fiercest Liberian circumcision mask coexists with the most delicately composed of John Sloan's etchings.

Gross's own art work is also displayed harmoniously in this setting, for this is a collector who is himself collected. His wood and bronze sculptures of balancing and tumbling acrobats and women and children defying the laws of gravity have been acquired by numerous important museums, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Museum of Modern Art, the Whitney, the Philadelphia, the Brooklyn, and the Hirshhorn. He is a sculptor with an international reputation and a comfortable income.

Yet, nearly all of the couple's rich array of paintings, drawings, sculptures, prints, and furniture was acquired when Gross was a young, struggling artist who could not be sure of his livelihood from one week to the next. Still, his eye was sharply trained and his passion for having art around him at all costs quickly infected Renee, his wife of 49 years. Their daughter, the artist Mimi Gross, was not immune. She can date her history as art pack rat from the age of six.

The Grosses are happily awash in prints, watercolors, and drawings by Picasso, Matisse, Leger, Chagall, Lautrec, Lachaise, Henry Moore, Nadelman, Grosz, Pascin, Demuth, and Larry Rivers, and paintings by Milton Avery, Stuart Davis, Raphael Soyer, Federico Castellón, Jacob Lawrence, Red Grooms, Marsden Hartley, Max Weber, Arshile Gorky, and Willem de Kooning. But they are best known for the quality and breadth of their African art collection, the bulk of which has just completed a four-museum tour. They own more than 1,000 wooden pieces and well over 6,000 goldweights (tiny





TRIBES

1 Dogon	8 Ibo	15 Balumbo
2 Bambara	9 Afo	16 Babembe
3 Senufo	10 Grassland Tribes	17 Bayaka
4 Dan	11 Fang	18 Bapende
5 Ashanti	12 Bakwele	19 Bushongo
6 Yoruba	13 Kuyu	20 Baluba
7 Benin	14 Bakota	21 Basonge

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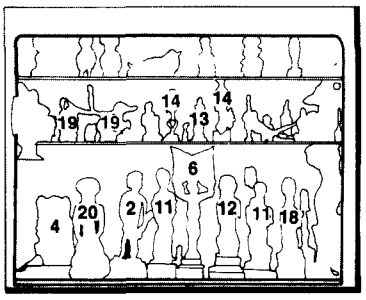
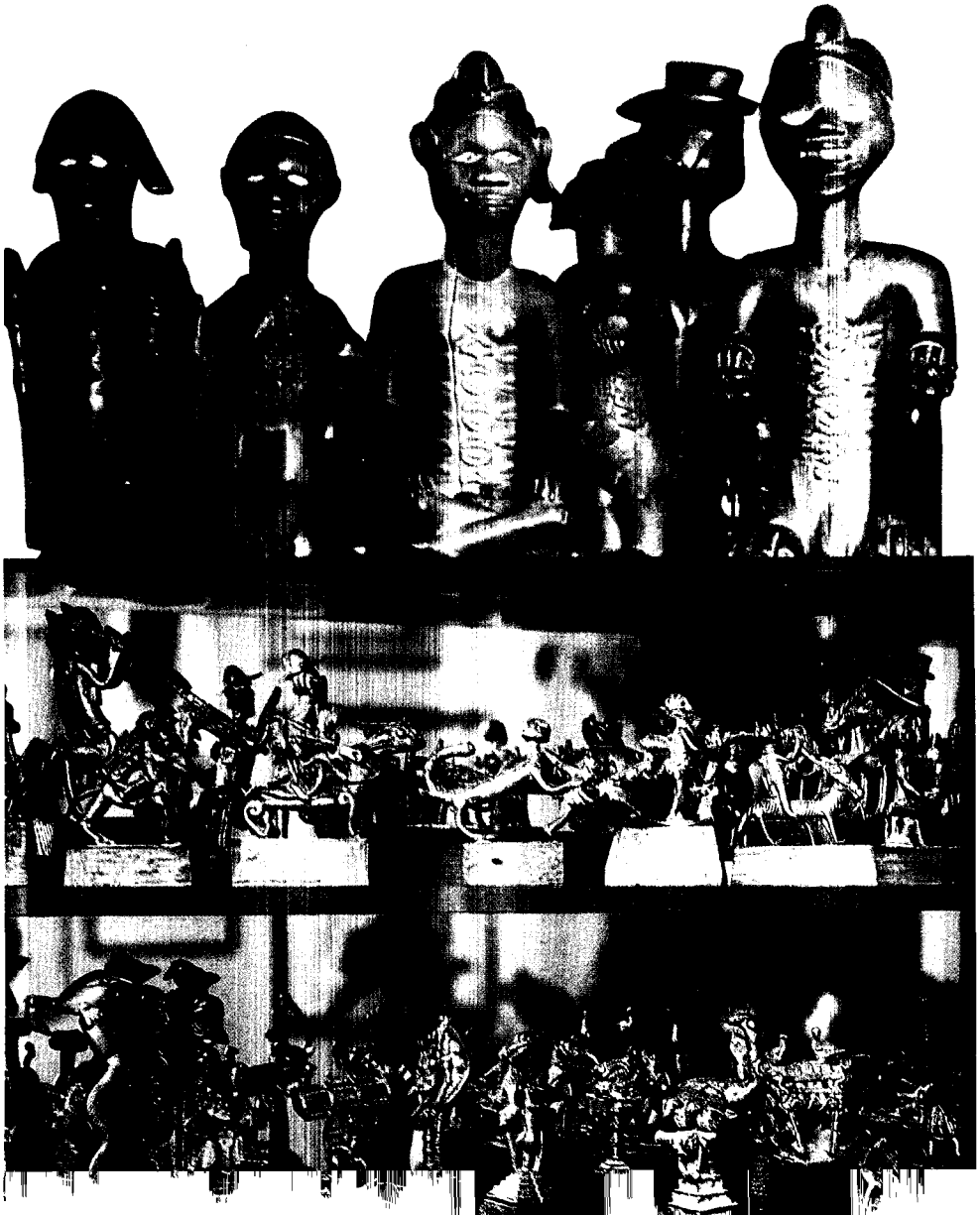


Top left: numbers in the diagram above refer to the identifying chart on page 44. Middle: Babembe fetishes from Zaire. Bottom: brass figures used for weighing gold dust among the Ashanti of Ghana.



brass sculptures made by the Ashanti to measure gold dust). The numbers sound impressive, but the Grosses insist that discussing the art in terms of quantity is inimical to their feelings about it. Neither Chaim nor Renee Gross are sure how many African sculptures they possess, purposely so. "It's better if you don't know," Gross says. "You shouldn't be thinking about writing things down in a book. You have to have a love for art to collect it. If I don't have a love for something, I don't buy it. With everything I've ever bought, there was something between the object and me. You could say I felt a magnetism between us."

Just what was the magnetism of African sculpture? Its uncompromising starkness and sense of abstract design would certainly attract any modernist. In Gross's case, the relationship proved inspiring: In the Thirties he revived the art of wood carving in America when contemporary sculpture was surfeited with stale responses to marble and bronze. He, as few others, could appreciate the elemental forms, the fineness and the intricacy of the carving and incising (each work always derives from a single piece of wood), the patina, and the respect for materials.

The Grosses have also befriended African art because there was an urgent need to do so. Much of it has been the victim of both scarcity and apathy. Wood, of course, is a perishable substance, and the tribesmen themselves made no attempt to preserve all their ceremonial and utilitarian objects. The British, French, German, and Belgian colonials stole thousands of headdresses, masks, and totems as items of curiosity and donated them to their local anthropology museums. As far as art history is concerned, the missionaries were even more ruinous: They understood the power of the fetishes

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PHOTOS BY DON KUSHNICK

The Grosses' living room: Chaim Gross's own sculptures along top of bookcase; another by daughter Mimi at extreme right.

and burned as many as they could.

The upshot of decades of destruction and neglect is that hardly any masterworks of African sculpture are left in Africa, and that when an outstanding piece does come on the market, the price will range between $25,000 and $300,000. No longer stigmatized as the crude playthings of savages, African sculptures have become chic securities just right for living rooms from Westchester to Bel Air.

But the general lateness in discovering African art was to Chaim and Renee Gross's benefit. They acquired and accumulated with the same resourcefulness and energy that nourished the sculptor's own career. Indeed, Chaim Gross's entire art collection, like his life, is an American success story.

One of 10 children, Gross was born in 1904 in Austrian Galicia (now partitioned between Poland and the Ukraine). During his early years, Cossacks drove his family from their house; later, they were separated from each other during World War I. As a boy of 12, Gross was forced by the Prussians to haul corpses off the battlefields. He had no traditional childhood, no adolescence, but he did manage to attend art school in Budapest and Vienna and visit several museums in Central Europe. In 1921 he arrived in the United States, penniless.

But to Gross, poverty unaccompanied by war and persecution was not intimidating, and he set out to become an artist. While he studied, Gross lived in one room, worked as a delivery boy, and played chess for nickels. To keep up his spirits, he turned to collecting. "Even while Chaim was in school," explains Renee Gross, "he would buy a book or a drawing whenever he had an extra dollar. He had no one and the art was like having family or friends. It helped give him a feeling of security."

Gross started collecting African art in the mid-Thirties. At the time they picked up many of their sculptures for as little as a few dollars apiece. The painter John Graham told him that Frank Crowninshield, the editor of *Vanity Fair*, was disposing of his sculpture collection. Gross leaped at the opportunity to buy several highly stylized Kota reliquary guardians, paying Crowninshield in installments of $3 to $5 a week. The Grosses toured Europe and Israel in 1949, when there were enormous bargains to be had in the aftermath of World War II, and they came by a sizable percentage of their African collection then.

Meanwhile, Gross was just as busy trading his own work for examples by his friends. That is how he acquired personally inscribed paintings and drawings by Avery, de Kooning, Nevelson, and Moses and Raphael Soyer.

Gross has long been a familiar presence in galleries and auction houses. He's enjoyed marvelous luck on such excursions, if "luck" isn't too feeble a word to apply. At the old Parke-Bernet galleries, he bid $40 for a lyrical Matisse lithograph of a young woman and it held. An equivalent recently sold for $13,500.

Gross also recognized a cast of a Delfiore sculpture in the window of an antiques shop and went in to inquire. The proprietor assured him that it was hundreds of years old, but consented to part with it for $18. Another casting now rests in a major Italian museum.

The notion of family pride and protectiveness pervades their plans for the collection. They have never sold any of their sculpture: It would hurt too much to put it on the auction block. But they have donated several masks and figures to the Museum of African Art in Washington, D.C. As he walks down the stairwell lined with headdresses and helmets, past an atrium where a life-size warrior stands watch, and into his studio, Chaim Gross talks of safeguarding this heritage and making sure that someone else can enjoy it as much as he has. In this room he sits companionably with hundreds of his own creations, and one realizes anew that along with his constant, active alertness to the art of others, he has put in long hours and full weeks here for over half a century. How did he find time to do it all? Chaim Gross says, "Where there's a love, there's a way." ■

Avis Berman is a freelance writer and critic.

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A Cornucopia of Collectibles

By William B. Logan

The moon shines half concealed by passing clouds on 12th Street in Kansas City, Missouri. It's a warm spring Saturday in 1920, the men and women promenading down the glittering street, over the trolley tracks,and past the shop that features Espina Havana Cigars. Fifty cents buys this postcard view in four-color lithography, the glitter provided by flecks of silver foil.

At 50¢ or $5 million, Americans are looking for the past in postcards and fine arts prints, barbed wire, and Tiffany lamps. Ancient kings sought Brueghel's canvases or a piece of the true cross; we pursue Van Briggle art pottery or a bit of Abraham Lincoln's coffin.

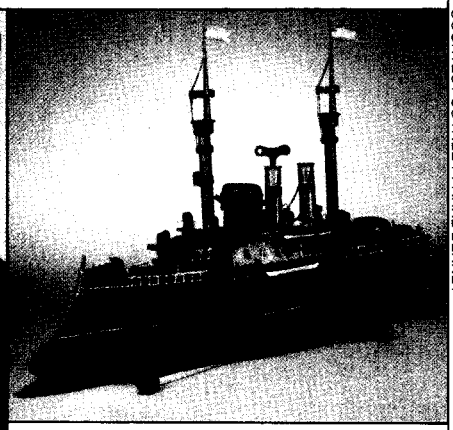
Though today's wealthy can still buy a Brueghel for a cool quarter million or ,like Nelson Bunker Hunt, pay $5.25 million for a Leonardo da Vinci manuscript, the average man need not turn to raising chickens. Hundreds of serious antiques and collectibles can be found for prices from pennies to a few thousand dollars.

But the days when collectors found treasure mixed with the trash in granny's attic may be numbered. Since the early Sixties, the value of collectibles as a whole has been rising at an average rate of 10 percent each year. Top-quality items have appreciated even faster. The value of investment-grade stamps rose more than 43 percent in 1979 alone. A Chippendale window seat that sold for around $3,000 in 1976 attracted a buyer at $11,000 this past January. A silk Persian rug worth $4,800 a decade ago brings almost $20,000 now. The big three auction houses— Sotheby Parke Bernet Christie's, and Phillips—reported $1 billion in sales worldwide for 1980, up 25 percent from last year. With prices rising at such a rate, few grandmothers are left who don't know the value of that old tin horse swinging on the barn top.

Collectibles have been riding high for more than a decade, the lone dip in prices coming during the 1974-75 recession. Dealers and experts are publicly optimistic about the chance for a continuing boom, but they stress the need for careful buying. "Once you could buy indiscriminately and values would rise," says Eric Silver, head of 19th- and 20th-century art at Sotheby's, "but today it's important to buy the very best you can afford."

You can't check the *Wall Street Journal* to learn what an object is worth. Only careful study of the chosen field arms the collector to buy wisely. Over the last year, spectacular price collapses have resulted when items were bid up too high by witless investors. Smart collectors stood aside in early 1980, while speculators drove the price of a good set of 1930 Graf Zeppelin airmail stamps to around $5,000. The high price flushed out large numbers of the supposedly rare set, and by year's end the price had fallen to $1,900. Likewise in the generally strong photography market, collectors gasped when a print of Ansel Adams's "Moonrise, Hernandez, New Mexico" shot up to $16,000 at a Christie's auction in early 1980, only to fall back to $11,000 by November. Says noted New York dealer Lee Witkin, "That kind of thing happens when investors think they've found something that's 'blue chip.' They don't consider other factors. Usually, they know too little and spend too much."

Scarcity, condition, and reputation all help decide a collectible's value. Anyone who plans to collect as an investment should be an expert in his field and a very patient creature. Three to five years is the minimum term most dealers recommend for expecting significant appreciation. During that time, of course, the only interest the collector earns is the pleasure the collection gives him. Investors should also note the special costs involved in acquiring collectibles. Appraisal and insurance are *de rigueur*. Dealers' selling prices average 20 percent to 50 percent above their buying prices, and even at auction, you'll pay commissions of up to 20 percent. (continued)



COURTESY SOTHEBY PARKE BERNET

Left: Toulouse-Lautrec's poster "Aristide Bruant" sold for $26,000. Right: A 1905 toy battleship brought $21,000.

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COURTESY SOTHEBY PARKE BERNET

A 19th-century, Cuban, cigar-store Indian girl, made of painted wood.

AMERICANA

A New Jersey weathervane collector drove the same route to work for several years before his errant gaze fell on a bar sign at the roadside. Topping the sign he found a fine turn-of-the-century example of the copper horse vane called "Dexter." He bought it for a song; today vanes like it fetch $1,000 or more. Such stories abound in an Americana market that has seen values turn trash to treasure as fast as any other collectibles. Theorem paintings and samplers, weathervanes and decoys, folk sculpture and quilts, all have averaged annual appreciation of up to 40 percent over the last 10 years.

The rapid increase has brought with it higher risks. Though dealers are still optimistic about rising values, they note that collectors should be especially wary of "auction fever." According to expert Thomas K. Woodard, heavy competition for certain weathervanes and samplers has sometimes pushed prices up to "three to five times their realistic value." Good buys continue to appear in sheet-iron weathervanes, folk sculpture, and quilts, particularly crib quilts. Collectors wishing to invest in the under-$1,000 category may want to examine mourning pictures, calligraphic drawings, and fraktur, genres of amateur artistry of which fine examples are still readily available.

Rising prices have also made fakes a serious problem in the field, particularly for weathervanes. Molded-copper, sheet-iron, and cast-iron vanes have all been faked expertly. Until you know your field well, the best advice is to seek a dealer who guarantees what he sells. A compendium of most kinds of Americana (including furniture) is William C. Ketchum's *The Catalog of American Antiques.*

AMERICAN ART

Between the Twenties and the late Fifties, the work of European masters like Cézanne, Renoir, and Turner did not increase significantly in value. Then, prices soared. Up until a few years ago, American figural painters were vastly undervalued but today their best work is skyrocketing. Those who want to collect in the art market need considerable capital and well-informed taste. Even in a strong market, increases are not across-the-board. At a 1980 auction, for example, a Gilbert Stuart portrait of a young woman brought only $4,500, half its value in 1920.

Two 19th-century American groups have been rising solidly at auction: the so-called American Impressionists, including Hassam, Prendergast, and Twachtman; and the Hudson River School, represented by Durand, Cole, and Church. Investors seeking paintings in either of these schools, however, will find that top-quality work starts at $50,000!

American naive painting, by artists like Ammi Phillips and S.A. and R.W. Shute, has been appreciating rapidly, though some prominent dealers, such as Larry Fleischman of Kennedy Galleries, feel that prices in the field are inflated. A November 1980 auction saw two Phillips paintings go for about $180,000 each, three times their pre-sale estimate.

For the investor with only $5-15,000 to spend, Fleischman's favorite is the 20th-century watercolorist John Marin. His drawings are available at $2-5,000, his paintings at $15,000. Canvases by contemporary artists who have yet to build big reputations can be had for still less, but as an investment, their work is risky.

BOOKS

The prices of antique books, like those of many established collectibles, have reflected changing tastes through the years. John Galsworthy, whose books brought as much as $3,000 during the Twenties, seldom finds a buyer at more than $150 today. Ernest Hemingway's works, on the other hand, have gone from lows of a few dollars in the Fifties to a present high of $12,000 for one early book.

Successful book collecting depends on careful choice of specialties. "The field isn't just huge," says George Lowry of New York's Swann Galleries; "it can be anything you want it to be." Collectors specialize in a publisher, a genre (from fiction to the occult), an author, even in books from the year of their birth! The coherent, logically organized collection brings a better price at auction than do scattered topics.

Modern first editions by well-known authors formed the core of many Seventies collections, but competition may have inflated the prices of many of these. Several experts pick the 18th- and 19th-

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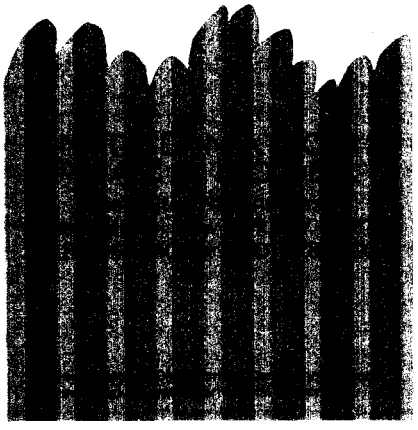

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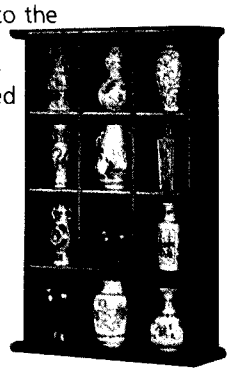

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Advance Reservation Deadline: June 15, 1981
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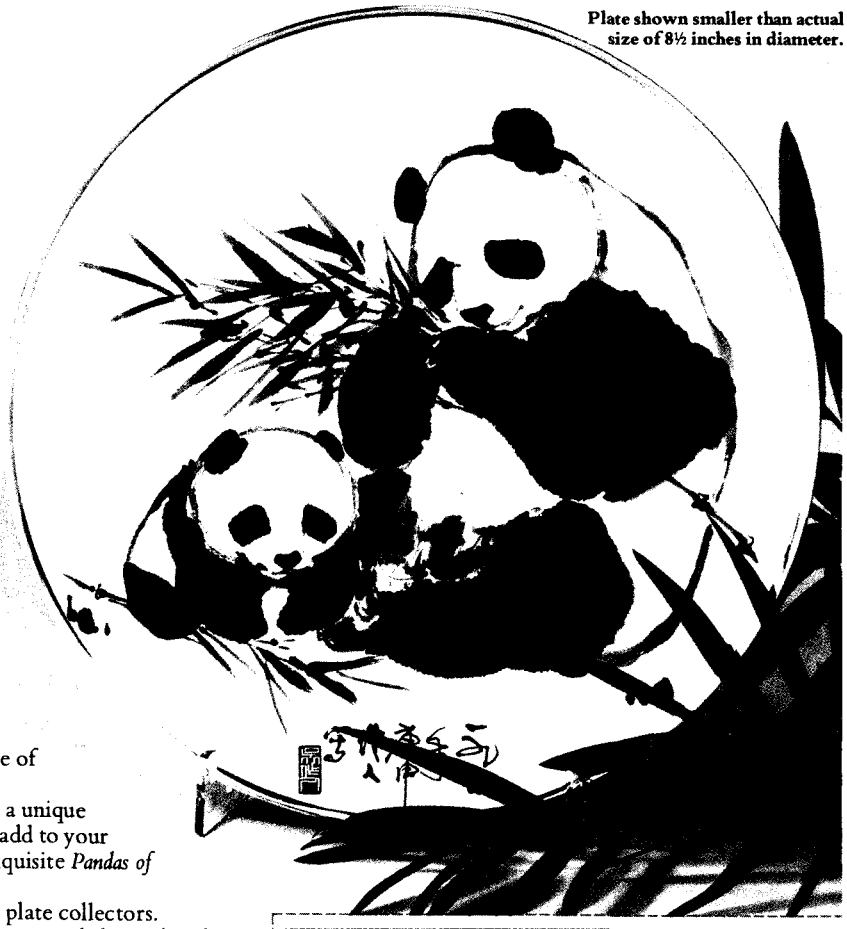

Plate shown smaller than actual size of 8½ inches in diameter.

In recent years, the Western world has had little opportunity to enjoy the remarkable works of China's greatest living artists.

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century illustrated book as a field ripe for collectors. Even within such a narrow field, choices for specialization are legion. Illustrated travelogues, such as the account of Perry's voyage to Japan, are one possibility; illustrated editions of the works of famous authors are another.

Whatever his interest, the novice collector is well advised to acquaint himself with dealers who share his special tastes. A nationwide directory of booksellers that lists the specialties of each is available free of charge from the Antiquarian Booksellers Association of America, 50 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, New York 10020.

TOYS

Brightly colored tin parrots play back their owners' jokes, thanks to a tape recorder embedded in their bases. Squadrons of horsedrawn firefighters rush headlong in one direction, while a flotilla of battleships advances against them. Automobiles from 1906, complete with bevelled glass windshields, working doors and hand brakes, and a finish any car fancier would admire, wait at curbside for a tiny gentleman to mount. A convention of toy collectors is like an attic full of Christmases past.

The great regional toy shows held annually in major cities around the country are still a good place to buy toys or just to learn more about them. Increasingly, however, the most important sales happen at auction. The record price for any toy is $21,000 for a rare, 1905 German-made battleship. It came at Sotheby's auction in 1979. This year, the greatest auction interest has been generated by 19th-century European tin toys made by manufacturers like Carette and Gunthermann. Cars and other transportation items run by powerful clockwork motors have been the hottest sellers, but with prices as high as $7,000, the beginning collector may well demur.

Among the most sought-after American toys are the early clockwork cycle-riders and trains made by the Ives company. These 19th-century toys have a more rustic look than their German contemporaries, but are equally in demand. In fact, Ives toys in good condition rarely appear on the market. Turn-of-the-century and 20th-century cast-iron toys—firefighters, circus wagons, and occupational wagons—lost up to 50 percent of their value a few years ago, due largely to a serious problem with fakes. Today, their prices are creeping forward again.

The best buys among all toys, says Pamela Brown of Sotheby's, are probably mechanical robots and battery-operated Japanese toys. Though such toys are still scarcely 30 years old, their whimsical design and "action" make them a good bet for future appreciation. Some can still be found at flea markets, and the market prices average under $100. (continued)

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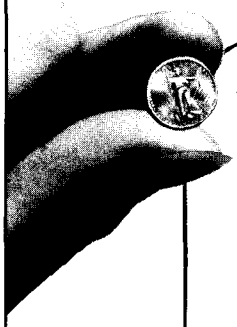

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POSTERS

French artist Jules Chéret, known as the father of the modern poster, got his inspiration from woodblock prints advertising circuses in 1859. Talented artists like Toulouse-Lautrec, Aubrey Beardsley, and Alphonse Mucha followed in his wake. Posters advertising everything from trains and ships to music-hall and exhibition attractions had gained international celebrity by the early 20th century. Collectors ripped *affiches* from French kiosks before the events they advertised had even occurred. Turn-of-the-century New Yorkers amused themselves by holding "poster parties" whose celebrants came dressed as their favorite poster.

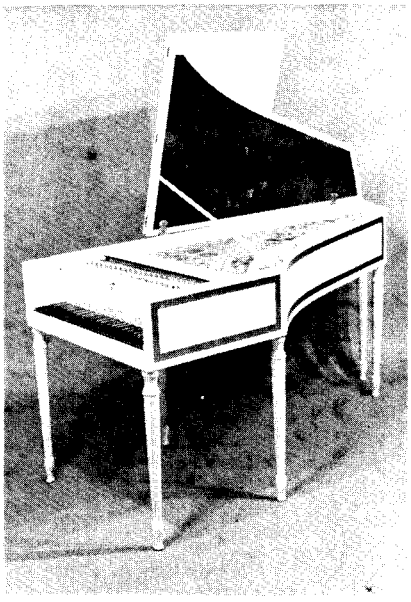
No one dresses up as Jane Avril anymore, but collectors have paid steadily appreciating prices for the posters themselves. Examples by Toulouse-Lautrec brought a respectable $200 or $300 right after World War II, buoyed by the fact that he made only about 30 different posters during his short career. Those same *affiches* are among today's most costly items. An original "Moulin Rouge" brought $57,000 at a 1980 auction. Important posters by the likes of Mucha and A.M. Cassandre and fine examples of sought-after genres like early French railway *affiches* bring five-figure bids. Other less lofty specialties include propaganda posters, product advertisements, and sheets touting magazines such as *Harper's* and *Lippincott's*. A set of 160 psychedelic posters advertising Sixties rock bands sold for $3,000 in 1980.

Though he feels posters are still undervalued as a class, Christie's poster expert Nicholas Dawes notes that the recent market has been soft for all but the top-quality material. Here, too, one should expect to hold posters for several years before expecting significant profit. One area in which Dawes sees rising interest is the same from which Chéret took his first inspiration: American turn-of-the-century circus posters are still widely available at $300 to $3,000.

ART GLASS AND ART POTTERY

The big names in art glass—Tiffany, Steuben, Gallé, Daum, Lalique—are known even outside collectors' circles. Tiffany's much-imitated floral lamps regularly bring $12,000 or more, while the record for any art glass is the $200,000 paid for one hand-carved example of Gallé cameo glass. Art glass may have been making the news, but art pottery is showing just as striking appreciation in a younger and less pricey market.

The big three potters among the two dozen who flourished during the American Arts and Crafts movement (1876-1917)



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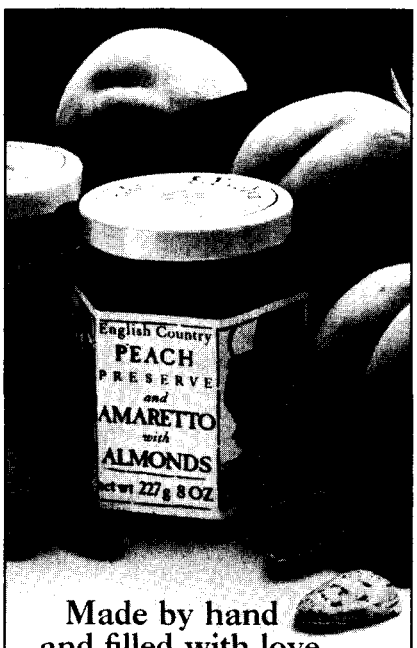

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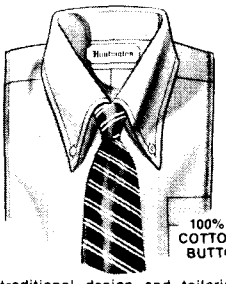

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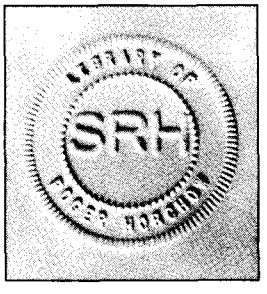

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are Rookwood of Cincinnati, Grueby of Boston, and Van Briggle of Colorado Springs. All kept making pottery after World War I, but their later pieces are generally less desirable.

Though their styles were as widespread as the locations of their factories, all favored decoration. Rookwood's vases feature figural paintings and glossy glaze. The factory's best painters—including Albert Valentien, Matthew A. Daly, and Kataro Shirayamadani—each signed their work. Their individual interpretations of themes common to all the company's painters—portraits, dogs, horses, flowers, and landscapes—make their work worth more than that of their colleagues. Occasional flights of fancy might produce an unusual design from one of these artists, like the twined carp on a tall vase by Valentien. Rookwood prices also vary with the glaze employed. "Standard glaze" is least desirable, but such scarcer variants as iris, seagreen, and tiger-eye glazes add value to the piece. A Rookwood vase holds the art pottery record at $32,000, but good vases fetch as little as $300.

Grueby and Van Briggle potters were both more reserved than Rookwood's, concentrating on gracefully carved or molded symmetrical floral patterns and mat glazes. Prices for both makers begin in the low hundreds, reaching as high as the mid-thousands.

"The whole market is rising rapidly," says Eric Silver of Sotheby's, "so we're beginning to get a sense of how much is out there." Recently, a woman had him appraise a Grueby vase she had bought for $10. Its estimated worth is near $1,000. The young market means lucky finds are still possible, but it also indicates that the rarities aren't yet well established. Consider carefully before paying top prices.

SILVER

The novice silver collector faces a wilderness of hallmarks, styles, silver grades, and forms. Guidance and study are essential. Specialties include periods, nationalities, or first-class makers such as Brasher in America and De Lamerie in Great Britain. With the exception of little-collected Spanish, Portuguese and Latin American silver, values depend less on national origin than on rarity and design of a given piece. A maker's name can add significantly to the price. A fine, anonymous 18th-century English creamer may sell for $1,000, where a similar piece signed by Brasher would bring four times that. If signed by Paul Revere, it might go to $20,000!

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melted during the French Revolution, they are generally scarce. Prices start at around $3,000 and quickly scale six-figure heights. The American 18th century starts lower, but can attain similar highs: A 1799 Wishart punch bowl engraved with scenes of sea battles brought $105,000 at a June 1979 auction, tops for American silver.

Eighteenth-century English silver, by contrast did far less well through the Seventies, but some experts think it's due for revaluation. English Victorian silver is already surging. American 19th-century silver and 18th-century anonymous pieces, according to Sarah Coffin of Sotheby's, are in good supply and generally undervalued. Good small pieces start at as little as $100.

COINS AND STAMPS

Few are the curious children of the Fifties and Sixties who never felt the magic of the words "1909 SVBD" or of the pale, submarine green of certain stamps. Until silver coinage was discontinued, it was still possible to find unusual coins in the cash register. Stamps are still discovered in granny's steamer trunk.

Hobbyist collecting—purely for pleasure—is by no means dead, but the number of investors in both fields drove prices up dramatically during the Seventies. Coin and stamp values rose at average yearly rates of 20 or 25 percent, the biggest gains coming in U.S. 19th-century coins and pre-1922 stamps. The 1979-80 recession with its attendant credit crunch brought the spiral to a skidding halt. Some coins lost as much as 40 percent of their value, while both markets generally stagnated at constant levels. The new year has brought renewed strength to most areas, but experts are stressing quality purchases and advising investors to hold their items for at least five years.

The fall in coin prices has brought many issues down to a level where they may be worth buying again. The value of the average, uncirculated U.S. silver three-cent piece, for example, stands today at around $2,800. That's down from $4,000 in early 1980, but up from the $300 the same coins brought in 1977.

Another good bet, says Cole Danehower of Los Angeles auctioneers Bowers & Ruddy, is colonial coins. Investors who were driven out of the U.S. coins market by high prices in 1979 gravitated toward colonial issues. Some coins valued at $100 in early 1980 have advanced to $300 today.

Institutional investors may send prices for the rarest stamps up 25 percent or more in 1981, but the middle of the market will not rise so dramatically.

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A 1798 U.S. dollar. The cost of coins is down: They may be worth buying again.

Investors should look at long-term investments in pre-1922 stamps. Louis Grunin, president of the Stanley Gibbons auction house, suggests that unusual stamps will do best among the less costly items. Stamps made from recut dies, for example, now bring two to three times what the ordinary issue will. A used three-cent red-brown stamp of 1851, for instance, is worth $60 if ordinary, $120 or more if recut. Postal history is another growing specialty. Stamps marked with rare, historically important postmarks—from the Mississipppi steamers or Central American routes—are increasingly in demand.

William B. Logan is a freelance writer living in New York.

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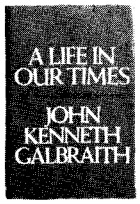
Galbraith Over Lightly

by Ronald Steel



A Life in Our Times
by John Kenneth Galbraith
Houghton Mifflin
576 pp., $15.95

Admittedly it would be difficult for a man of John Kenneth Galbraith's stature to keep a low profile, even if he so wanted. And he definitely does not so want. In a seemingly inexhaustible torrent of books, articles, and speeches over the past 50 years, he has expressed his opinion—with a tart tongue and a hint of weary condescension—on virtually every topic of public interest. His dazzling range stretches far beyond his professional field of economics to embrace works on Indian painting, his Scotch Canadian ancestors, and even fiction.

Galbraith, having produced some 21 books, is clearly a compulsive writer. Where others reach for a tennis racquet or a martini, he sits down at his typewriter. "The prime purpose of the writing being to fill in time," he explains of the novel he wrote when serving as U.S. ambassador to India. Fortunately for him this affliction is combined with a very special talent for elucidating the unnecessarily arcane mumbo-jumbo of economics, for delving into the curiosities of human behavior, and for thrusting rapiers into bloated reputations. The latter is one of his great joys, as this volume of memoirs makes clear. And what are memoirs, after all, but a chance to get even?

Like his friend and ideological sparring partner William F. Buckley, Galbraith seems to view the world with mixed bemusement and dismay, rather like a gourmet chef in a town where the basic diet is French fries with catsup. His technique can perhaps best be described as that of High Disdain—an attitude that endears him to those absolutely certain he cannot possibly be speaking of them.

Galbraith has made a most unusual literary career, one that rests as much on how he speaks as on what is being said. He is, in the most positive sense, a very gifted entertainer. This is not meant to denigrate his academic accomplishments, or his work as a government administrator and ambassador. His career is too distinguished to need yet another pat on the back. But it is nonetheless true that, in addition to students of his serious books on economics, he has attracted a following rather like that of Buckley or Gore Vidal.

Many readers with a minimal interest in economics have been drawn to Galbraith for the stylish manner by which he sacrifices sacred cows. He is indisputably a master of the sardonic phrase, champion of the arched eyebrow and the golden putdown. This skill—no common one in the parched fields of academe and government—has also provoked a good deal of professional jealousy on the part of his colleagues. "Notoriety in a university is always," he notes, "often justly, seen by those so spared as proof of inferior scholarship."

One opens *A Life in Our Times* expecting to be entertained and also, because memoirs are a summing-up, to gain an insight into the man behind the rapier. One is not disappointed on the first count. Galbraith's wit slashes as ever through the pretensions of ignorant professors, incompetent generals, foolish businessmen, and pompous politicians. Also, in the manner of memoirs, he graciously tips his hat to those he admired, such as Adlai Stevenson, Jawaharlal Nehru, and John F. Kennedy, not to mention various friends and helpers brought on momentarily for a bow.

Galbraith forgives a great deal of those he admires, and he has a fine time thumbing his nose at those he felt had risen to a station beyond their merits, such as Dean Rusk, the devious John Foster Dulles and his rather dim brother Allen, and the hapless Nathan Marsh Pusey of Harvard. And he gets off a good many *bon mots*, such as Joseph Schumpeter's observation that one servant is worth a thousand gadgets; Mencken's comment that conscience is the inner voice that warns you someone may be looking; and Churchill's adjuration that one should not criticize one's government when out of the country, and never cease to do so when at home. Such lines are surely worth the price of admission.

The problem is that the one-liners are—with the exception of the pages on the Kennedy campaign and the Vietnam War—the book's most energetic feature. The rather laconic title, *A Life in Our Times*, conveys a sense of lassitude. One feels that Galbraith is writing this book from some misplaced sense of duty, rather than as a labor of love or from a compelling need to say something. At a certain point in his life a public man is supposed to write a memoir.

But some duties, if this be one, should be shirked. There ought to be a powerful reason, other than a publisher's prodding or the need to fill in time, for a man like Galbraith to commit himself to such a task. He is not, after all, an ex-president looking for a tax shelter or justification by future generations mercifully spared his reign. The form sets up certain high expectations. It should offer us something we don't already know: whether it be dirty secrets of state, the accumulated wisdom of a lifetime, or an attempt to come to grips

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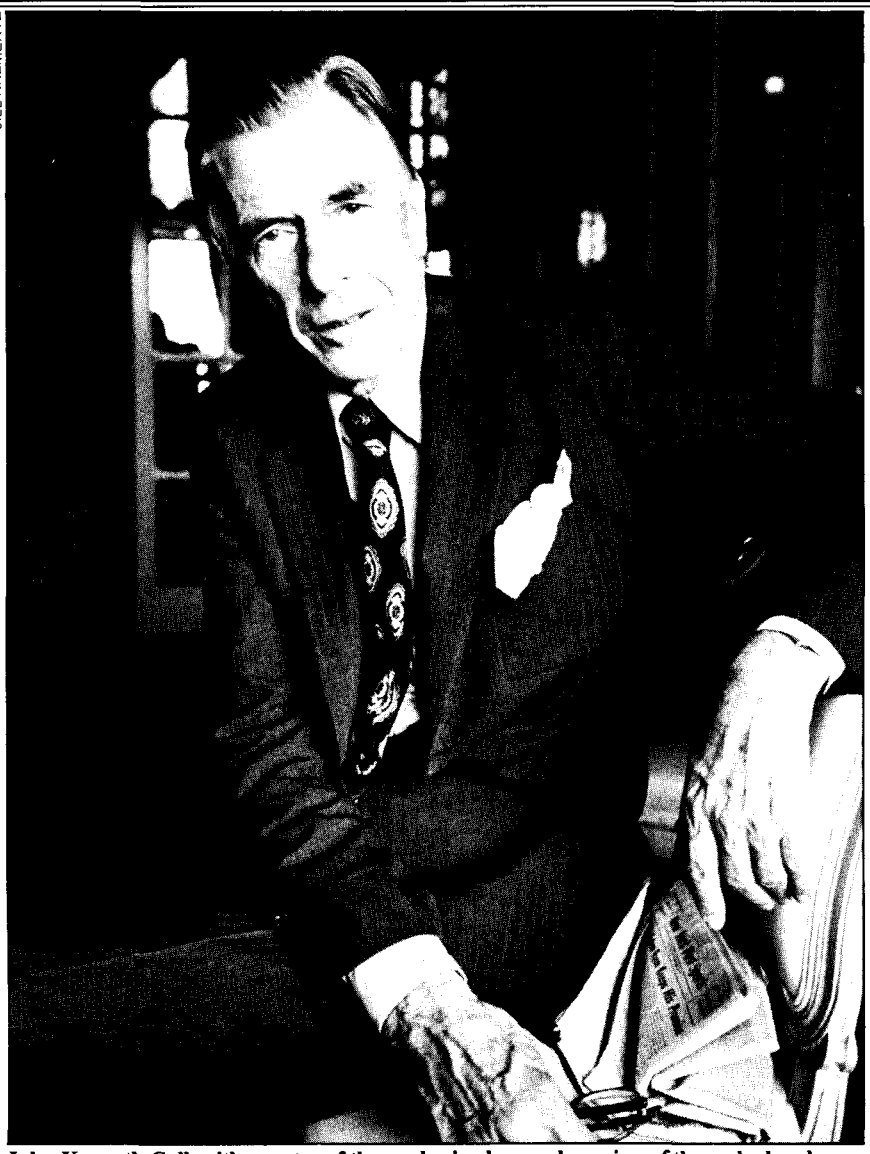
©JILL KREMENTZ

John Kenneth Galbraith, master of the sardonic phrase, champion of the arched eyebrow.

with the whole absurdity of life. What one does not expect, at least from a man of Galbraith's rare abilities, is simply a rundown of his books and jobs over the past half century, interspersed with amusing antecdotes and disdainful jibes at some of the unworthy many who crossed his path.

Rather than building to a central peak, the book rattles along inconclusively in the manner of an uninspired teacher's account of history as simply one damn thing after another. The book lacks theme and drama. It neither leads to nor away from anything. It is like the broad, flat plains of Ontario that the author left as soon as he was able, plains punctuated by church spires and telephone poles—in this case, anecdotes. But anecdotes, however clever or wicked, do not make a powerful book, any more than spires and poles make a civilization.

Ultimately one grows somewhat weary of Galbraith's bemused detachment: The irony becomes a bit suffocating, like a fire that has swallowed all the oxygen out of an enclosed room. One gets impatient with the too-easy snobbism ("some unreticent statesman fresh in from Grand Forks," or the "lieutenant colonel of deeply offensive personality—in civilian life a car dealer from Ohio") and the perplexing non sequiturs, such as the account of the Danish barber who claimed to be a resistance hero and wasn't. Like Henry Kissinger, the author tries to win our sympathy and enmesh us in a web of conspiracy by "confessing" his arrogance and snobbism. The charm is there, but one is not always fully persuaded.

What is most striking about this book is its cool, almost remote, tone. At the end of a nearly 600-page memoir one knows not much more about the man who wrote it than at the beginning. One has been told, of course, where Galbraith went to school, and what jobs he held, what books he wrote, what reviews they received, and what he thought of certain people encountered along the way. But of Galbraith the person one learns almost nothing. This is a very self-protective memoir. "I have always tried for a measure of detachment," Galbraith writes in describing his distance from the hot righteousness of Robert Kennedy. "I've felt that one should hold some part of one's self in reserve, never be too completely sure of being right." This can be an admirable quality in a human being. But it poses difficulties for the writer of an autobiography.

Certainly Galbraith is not a cold or unfeeling man. Rather, irony is a mask for emotion and a way of dealing with it. There are times when one would like him to be less sardonic, less detached, less in control. The effort of control takes a toll. Though these memoirs are continually informative and often entertaining, they rarely come alive. There is no effort to unravel the meaning of it all. They simply end with the author's declaration that he has now removed himself from politics—as though a political life were the only one.

Why write one's memoirs? Out of vanity, or self-justification, or, perhaps most admirably, from a desire to make some sense of one's life. Whatever the reason, the genre rarely produces masterpieces. Only once a generation does something very great — like the first volume of George Kennan's memoirs— come along and make one realize what possibilities the form holds. Such works are a rare combination not only of talent and intelligence, but of a painful confrontation with the self. The author of *A Life in Our Times* has plenty of the first two qualities, but has spared himself the third. His memoirs will please and entertain, but they will not be among his most lasting works.■

Ronald Steel's *Walter Lippmann and the American Century* won the 1980 National Book Critics Circle Award for nonfiction.

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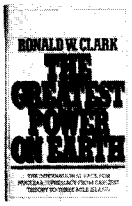
Bomb Scare

by Thomas Powers



The Greatest Power on Earth
by Ronald W. Clark
Harper & Row
352 pp., $13.95

For a few brief weeks after the end of World War II there were no nuclear weapons. The United States had used the three it built—one for a test in New Mexico to see if the thing worked, the other two as a means to convince the Japanese to stop fussing over the details of surrender. In the eyes of a naive observer, that period—roughly mid-August to mid-September 1945—might have seemed a fair facsimile of peace. But distinguishing war from peace is not so easy. It's like that old riddle about zebras: Are they black with white stripes, or white with black stripes? In this century, at any rate, the answer is clear: War is the world's normal state, with periods of preparation for war separating the periods of overt hostilities. The no-bomb weeks after Japan's surrender, very likely the last the world shall ever know, were an illusion. The United States was busy producing plutonium for more bombs—indeed, the reactors never shut down—and before the end of September had an inventory of bombs again. Britain and France never doubted that they would have bombs of their own, as soon as they could find the money to get working in earnest. And Stalin spurred his own bomb-builders after Truman casually mentioned at Potsdam, just two weeks before Hiroshima, that the U.S. had "a new weapon of special destructive force." The words "atomic" or "nuclear" did not pass between them. They were superfluous. Russia well knew what the British and Americans were up to behind the code names "Tube Alloys" and "Manhattan Project." Before the embers of one war had cooled, the world's great powers were busy arming for the next.

It is customary, in histories of the first atomic weapons, to speak of "lost opportunities" and "last chances" to create an international climate of trust and good will that might have spared the world its present perilous state. It is one of the many virtues of Ronald W. Clark in *The Greatest Power on Earth*, his history of those years, that he resists the temptation to make much of the feeble "initiatives" urged by a handful of worried physicists. At best these resulted in pro forma diplomatic exercises that went no where.

It took a great deal of prodding by the physicists in the war's early stages to get the bomb-building program out of committee and into the laboratory. Churchill and Roosevelt were busy running the war, and it was far from certain the bomb would work. But once the military saw the possible benefit there was no turning back. In May 1945, on the eve of success, General Leslie Groves estimated yield of the first bombs at the equivalent of 700-1,500 tons of TNT. He thought that well worth the trouble and expense. Seven hundred tons, after all, was hundreds of times bigger than the biggest bombs in the allied inventory.

In the event, of course, the yield turned out to be a great deal larger than that. The first bomb was equivalent to 15,000-20,000 tons of TNT, and Robert Oppenheimer, director of the main bomb-designing laboratory at Los Alamos, told a high-level committee shortly after the surrender of Germany that third-generation bombs might be expected to yield the equivalent of 10 to 100 *million* tons of TNT. Its magnitude seemed to have momentarily sobered the company. James F. Byrnes, at that time President Truman's personal representative on the committee, later said Oppenheimer's figures "thoroughly frightened" him. Doubtless others were frightened too. But fear of the bomb, as Clark demonstrates in abundant detail, wasn't enough. Fear of the Russians was greater. The "initiatives" of the peacemakers did not get far.

We might take the case of the Danish physicist Niels Bohr, whose knowledge and initial reluctance to work for either side, even after Hitler occupied his native Denmark, led both the Germans and the Allies to consider assassinating him. Eventually Bohr fled to Sweden and thence to England, where he began to worry about the postwar world. Defeating Germany, in Bohr's view, was only the first step. It was just as important to prevent a new arms race between Russia and the United States, and Bohr thought he knew how to do it.

On May 16, 1944, Bohr took his ideas to Churchill, but the meeting went badly. Bohr was neither quick nor succinct. He spoke in a low voice, he left his pipe clenched in his teeth, his accent made him hard to understand. Churchill thought him wooly-headed. "I cannot see what you are talking about," Churchill told him. "After all, this new bomb is just going to be bigger than our present bombs. It involves no difference in the principles of war. And as for any postwar problems there are none that cannot be amicably settled between me and my friend, President Roosevelt."

Bohr's peacemaking efforts—earnest, naive, hopeful, and futile—have been the subject of minute attention by historians. Clark gives us the outline of the story again. What was Bohr's plan that it should play such a central role in the sweet might-have-been? Simply this: The United States and Britain should tell the Russians what they were

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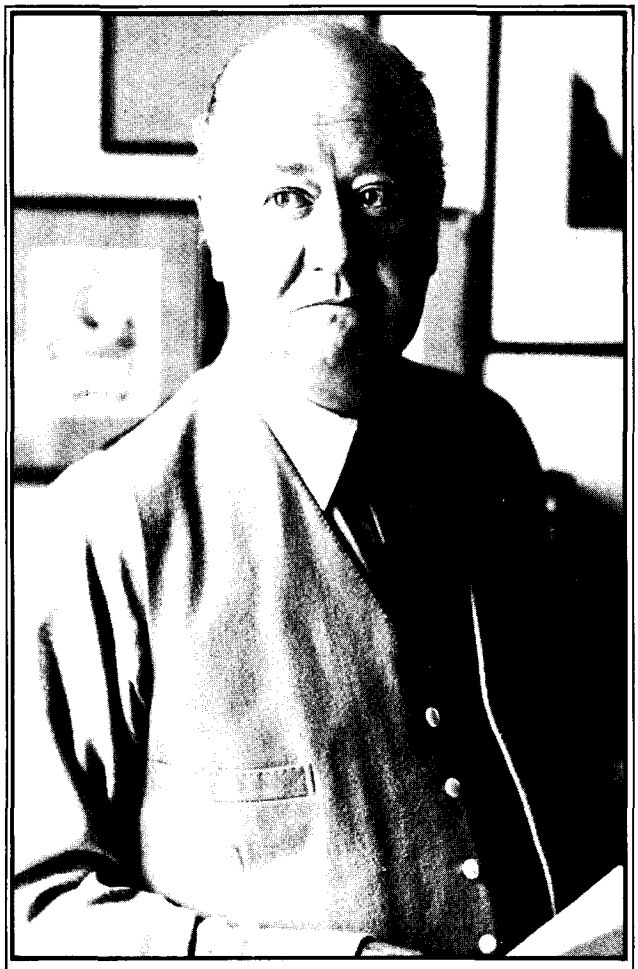
up to—not in detail, not invite them to join the project, not offer to give them bombs once they were made—just *tell* the Russians the West was at work on a weapon of "special destructive force," as Truman finally put it. If we did not, Bohr said, how could we expect the Russians to trust us in future, and if they did not trust us (or we them), how were we to avoid a new arms race that would cast into shadow all previous competition in arms. An excellent question. But it is important to get clear that Bohr's recipe for establishing trust was to tell the Russians we were preparing a mighty weapon. That was the whole of the plan. A serious, high-level conversation of an hour or so. This gesture, Bohr suggested—one cannot help but wonder if even he really expected so much of it—would calm the fears of Stalin. Bohr's "gesture" was entirely typical of those in the air at the time. Did it, or any of the others, offer a serious prospect of postwar amity and cooperation? Are tiny elves to be found at the foot of the garden?

Genuine international control of the bomb would have required a profound alteration in the sovereignty of nations, a single-minded and determined effort to surrender autonomy in the one field—that of arms—which has always been the most jealously preserved of all national prerogatives. This is not the sort of thing to be achieved by any number of "gestures," and when the United States finally did offer a detailed plan for international control, not even its authors believed for a minute the Russians would accept it. Nor were they at all sure the United States Senate would ratify the necessary treaty instruments if the Russians did accept it. It is even open to question whether those whose plan it was—Dean Acheson, say—*wanted* it to work. The ordinary people of the world—the citizens who carry the guns in war, or worry about those who do, who live in the cities threatened with incineration by nuclear weapons—may have learned something about the futility of arms from World War II, for a time at least, but their leaders did not. If anything, they came out of the war more deeply dependent on arms for security than ever.

There have been a great many histories of the first years of the nuclear age. Clark's is an excellent addition to the field, a clear, logical, eminently readable account of the intimate cooperation between political and scientific men—very different types of personality brought together in something of a forced marriage, possible only in wartime, and indissoluble thereafter, as we have seen—which produced the bomb and all its progeny. Clark is of course best known as a biographer (*Freud, Einstein, The Life of Bertrand Russell*) and lucid explicator of science. He provides a fine intellectual history of the bomb—that half-enchanted, half-heartsick comprehension of what might be done with a chain reaction—proving that the bomb's only "secret" was whether it would work. Once that was settled at Hiroshima, proliferation was inevitable. Early predictions by political and military men, General Groves among others, that it would take the Russians 15 or 20 years to build their own bomb (never shared by scientists, who suggested that four or five years would do the trick, as indeed it did) were only wishful thinking. Groves hoped for a respite, a wall of time against the awful moment when the bomb would threaten us, too. When governments fall back on hope, it is because they have inwardly given way to despair.



Clark's history of the bomb is clear, logical, readable.

The growth of the nuclear fraternity is and ought to be alarming, especially to the immediate neighbors of the bomb-owners, but the real danger to the world lies in the arsenals of the United States and the Soviet Union. They have grown to staggering size. In mid-1980, according to the American intelligence community, the total number of warheads had reached 15,000 with a ratio of 9,000 to 6,000 favoring the Americans. By 1985 the total may be as high as 25,000, divided about equally. The two SALT agreements have only channeled arms-building, not limited it.

This situation has elicited many grim prophecies. As far back as October 1945, on receiving an award for his work at Los Alamos, Oppenheimer said: "If atomic bombs are to be added as new weapons to the arsenals of a warring world, or to the arsenals of nations preparing for war, then the time will come when mankind will curse the names of Los Alamos and Hiroshima." Oppenheimer's worst fears have all come to pass, with one exception. So far, we have avoided a big general war. That is the bright side. The dark side is that the situation is out of control. ■

Thomas Powers, author of *The Man Who Kept the Secrets: Richard Helms and the CIA*, is currently writing a history of strategic weapons.

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Gordimer's South Africa

by Alan Paton

July's People
by Nadine Gordimer
The Viking Press
192 pp., $10.95

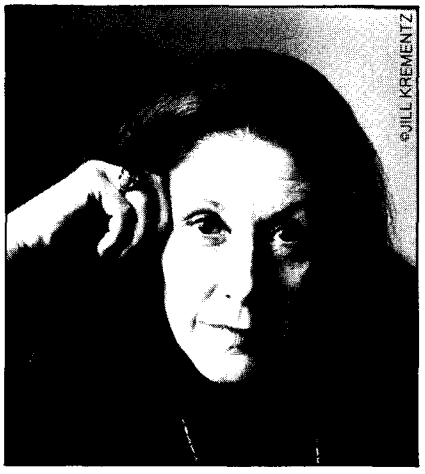
White South Africans do not like to talk about their fears—of black revolution, the destruction of their world, the loss of their possessions. But Nadine Gordimer has written about them. In *July's People*, the alienation of blacks has finally brought revolution. Miss Gordimer does not describe the revolution, its griefs and violences; instead, we hear about them over a badly working radio. She places three quite ordinary people against the background of upheaval and describes its effect on their lives with a subtlety and a creative skill that compels my admiration.

Architect Bamford Smales and his wife Maureen are "white liberals" who live in an affluent white suburb in Johannesburg and claim to want black liberation. In fact they had thought more than once of leaving the country, but never got around to it. Then suddenly Johannesburg itself explodes. Black gunmen fire into the white shopping malls. Fires break out in the white suburbs.

The Smales family finds a saviour in July, their faithful servant for 15 years, who leads them and their three children to July's homeland, a hot country in the lowveld of the Transvaal. They hide the Smaleses' truck in the thorn bushes, and July tells his people that the truck has been given to him. The Smaleses seem reassured by July's concern for their welfare, but July's wife wants to know why they have come to her if they have had a room to sleep in, a room to eat in, a room to sit in, a room to wash in. How could they have nowhere else to go? Slowly Miss Gordimer shows us that these are two separate worlds, that they hardly touch each other at any point. Such is art.

Adapting to life in the black homeland is awesome for the Smaleses: Maureen goes to work in the fields, Bam joins the men to put up a water tank. But a great shock awaits them.

One morning July drives off to town in the truck. When he returns, he does not offer to give back the keys. The following day July says to Maureen, "You don't like I must keep the keys." He reminds her that in Johannesburg he was in charge of all keys. "You tell everybody you trust your good boy." He hammers on this theme until she bursts out that if he remembers all this, "What about Ellen?"—Ellen being the woman who lived with him in Johannesburg. Maureen knows that she will never be forgiven.



Gordimer's parable is her best novel yet.

The next catastrophic event involves a shotgun, which Bam shows July's young friend, Daniel, how to use. When the Smales family comes back from an outing one day, the gun—and Daniel—are gone. He has joined the revolution. Bam lies down on his bed, and rolls over onto his face, as he had never done in front of his sons before.

July's People is a compelling and powerful parable. This decent white man who wants black liberation is shattered by the loss of the gun. The gun that enabled the white man to conquer Southern Africa, the gun that has kept him safe and secure in power. Then suddenly the chuddering of a helicopter above the thorn trees is heard. Maureen hears the sound of English being spoken. "She can still hear the beat, beyond those trees, and she runs towards it. She runs." So ends the parable.

I have never found Nadine Gordimer's novels easy to read. Some people find them impossible. She does not make concessions to readers who want something simple. Yet I was caught up in the story of these refugees whose lives are stripped bare by the revolution.

July's People has a simplicity of style that Miss Gordimer has never achieved before. After I read *Burger's Daughter* I wrote to her to say that it was her best book, because it had a greater warmth in it than her other novels. She replied that she did not think warmth was essential in a novel. Well, Nadine, it's creeping in.

Miss Gordimer has acquired a massive reputation for her powers of observation of the human species. But her sterner critics have said that her observation is too cold and clinical. I have thought so myself. But I do not think that of *July's People*. I felt myself being drawn into this story. Perhaps I recognized something of myself in Bam. Perhaps Miss Gordimer recognized something of herself in Maureen.

For me this is the best novel that Miss Gordimer has ever written. It is certainly the warmest and the simplest. But of course the greatest parables are always warm and simple. ■

Alan Paton is the author of Cry, The Beloved Country, among other books.

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Fiction Briefs

Dad
by William Wharton
Alfred A. Knopf, 416 pp., $12.95

JUST WHEN we finish looking over our shoulder for our parents' influence, we find them waiting before us, as in William Wharton's *Dad*, in delusions that require sons to become fathers to their fathers. *Dad* is less eccentrically artful than Wharton's *Birdy*, but altogether more powerful in its almost journal-like account of an old man's fight against senility and his 50-year domination by what Wharton calls "the poverty mind": the blue-collar worker's surrender of his consciousness to company, religion, spouse, and ethnic codes.

Middle-aged artist John Tremond returns from Paris to California to care for his ailing mother and ends up trying to save Dad from the bureaucracy of death: doctors who write off the old; careless hospitals; aggressive funeral directors. While he is helping Dad rediscover a bit of youthful vitality, Tremond finds his college-age son has dropped out of school in a rush toward maturity. It's an old story, this man-in-the-middle business, but fresh in Wharton's telling because he lets experience —lunch, a crisis, baseball on TV— accumulate as naturally and surely as aging itself. The lives of Wharton's few characters don't get turned into metaphors. They are facts we forget are imagined. *Dad* has the authenticity of a report and is rehearsal for our parents' slide toward silence and our own.

—THOMAS LECLAIR

La Presidenta
by Lois Gould
Linden Press/Simon & Schuster
349 pp., $13.95

IN THIS INTRICATE recreation of the Eva Peron legend, Lois Gould eschews the story of the pat political hero to examine the myth-making process itself. The novel begins on the eve of General Montero's return to power, focusing first on the vain attempts of his new wife, Maria Blanca, to equal her regal predecessor, Maria Rosa (Peron), and then on the general's attempt to "revive his own legend" by exploiting the martyred eminence of his first wife. To this atmosphere of bristling politics, Gould adds the surrealism, myth, and fantasy of recent South American writers: We first meet Maria Rosa as an imposing corpse; then (in a series of flashbacks set against Maria Blanca's fledgling rise to power) as a cunning peasant who sleeps her way to the top.

But while these juxtapositions of fact and fame and the two Marias are stunning, too much of the novel dwells on the pleasantly erotic but ultimately predictable pattern of Maria Rosa's success: Her seduction of a singer wins her a ride to the capital city; her seduction of an important actress scores her a part in a play; her beguilement of two government officials gains an introduction to Montero; and her seduction of the public helps him win the presidency. One cannot help being relieved when Montero's enemies put an end to Rosa, who, after all, is only an exceptionally savvy whore, once transformed by political expediency, and now by Lois Gould's dazzling but ultimately uneven art.

—ROBIN BROMLEY

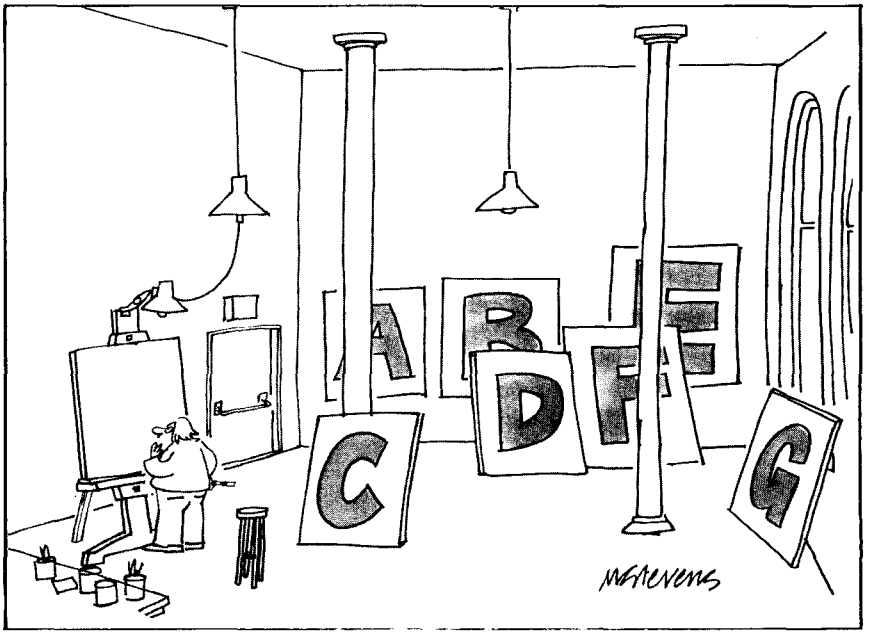
World Without End
by Francine du Plessix Gray
Simon & Schuster, 320 pp., $12.95

GOOD NEWS for Mary McCarthy: The novel of ideas isn't dead. Francine du Plessix Gray's latest book is full of ideas. The bad news is that the wit, elegance, and occasional brilliance that informed her first novel, *Lovers and Tyrants*, are only a shadow of their former selves. The author's intelligence, spirit, and seriousness of purpose are unmistakable, but what they add up to is less a novel than a morality play.

Three middle-aged friends, bound by ties of the flesh and the spirit, make a trip to the Soviet Union to "recreate . . . that ethereal summit of candor which only friendship can offer," to "take the risk of total truth-telling in order to make the last third or fourth of our existence bearable."

Edmund is an art historian and painter, Sophie a television news reporter, and Claire an ascetic WASP. The story of their Russian "truth-in" is punctuated by excerpts from their history— summers in Nantucket, love affairs with various forms of salvation, and a mutual obsession that has persisted since adolescence. Although these main characters occasionally come alive, they too often sound exactly alike. Their lives are perfect reflections of the cultural changes that have swept America since the Fifties. In fact, between the three of them, Edmund, Sophie, and Claire have hit every trendy road stop on the *zeitgeist*.

Like *Lovers and Tyrants*, this is an ambitious novel about love and friendship, faith and doubt, liberty and



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BOOKS

license. But these unruly concepts demand more stylistic discipline than Gray has chosen to impose. The result is a disappointing case of metaphysical sprawl. —JUDITH GIES

The Meeting at Telgte
by Günter Grass
translated by Ralph Manheim
Harcourt Brace Jovanovich
160 pp., $9.95

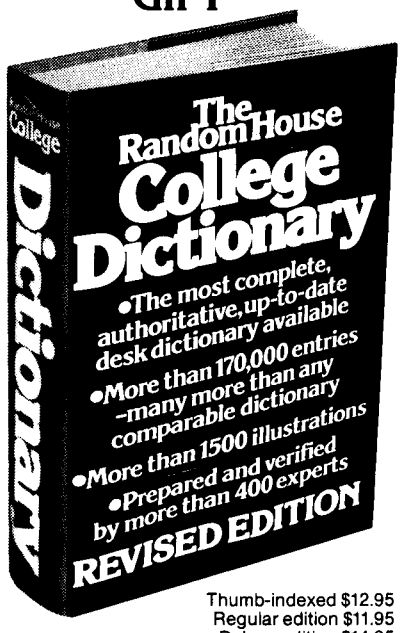
IN 1947 German writer Hans Werner Richter gathered a band of writers about him to discuss new works to purge the German language of Nazi terminology. The group met for 20 years—Günter Grass (*The Tin Drum*) first attending in 1955—and forms the germ for Grass's plot herein: In 1647, during the last months of the Thirty Years War, the German literati are called to a meeting at Telgte in Westphalia by poet-professor Simon Dach to purify German poetry and to appeal to the reigning princes for peace.

What happens, in Grass's hands, is a novel without dialogue that aspires to instant literary embronzification as the poets squabble in dactyls, mock in metaphor, and surrender to the divine spirit of language in a kind of discourse and triumphal progress of wind instruments through a nutshell. Many pages provoke an Olympian boredom that, in German, may be relieved by the music of language; but in English, too much fades into encyclopediana.

The powerlessness of poets over anything but language and their immortality beside perishable politicians are shown convincingly, with some passages of amusing satire. But the most vivid and inventive bursts of writing, brilliantly translated by Ralph Manheim, spring not from Grass's feelings for the poets but for the army's puffed up, lying regimental secretary, the grotesquely simple-minded realist Stoffel Gelnhausen and his bedmate Libuschka, a former sutler known as Mother Courage when dramatized by Bertolt Brecht. —DONALD NEWLOVE

The Shooting Party
by Isabel Colegate
The Viking Press, 216 pp., $11.95

THIS NOVEL moves with so stately a pace through its Edwardian setting that there seems, at first, to be a danger that nothing will happen. No fear: Some-

THE Smart GIFT

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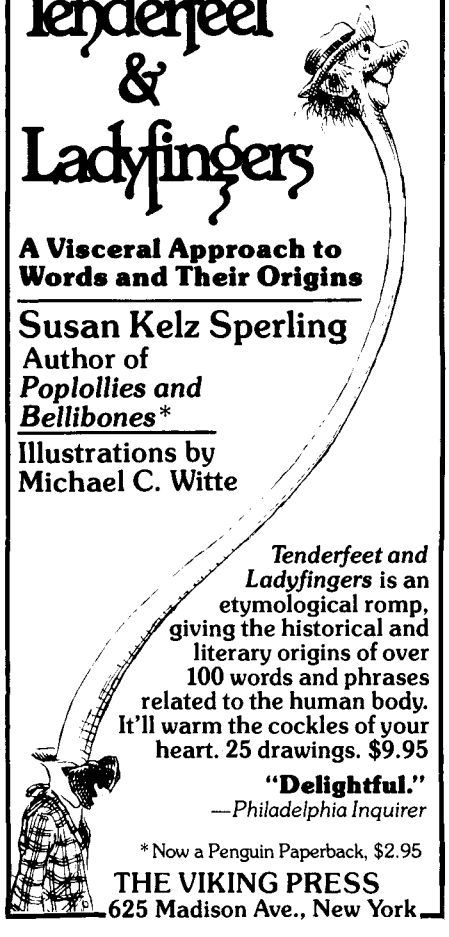
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BOOKS

how Isabel Colegate manages in a short space to describe in detail the life on an English country estate, with deftly rounded portraits of some three dozen minor characters, both upstairs and downstairs, and deeper views of half a dozen major ones. The time is 1913, and some of the best sportsmen in England, with their wives, have been invited to a pheasant shoot. Romantic intrigues are carried on discreetly, and one of the guests, Lionel Stephens, falls in love with the beautiful, married, Lady Lilburn. Lionel also becomes involved in a shooting competition with the testy Lord Hartlip, and when the rivalry gets out of hand, there is a tragic accident. The most severe judgment is made by the host, Sir Randolph Nettleby, who says to Lord Hartlip, "You were not shooting like a gentleman, Gilbert."

With perhaps too acute a sense of living at the end of an era, Sir Randolph writes in his diary, "If you take away the proper functions of an aristocracy, what can it do but play games too seriously?" In fact, the shooting party has been like a rehearsal for the Great War with which this beautiful world will blow itself up. With the old-fashioned virtues of gentle social comedy, lovingly created characters, and scope, *The Shooting Party* is a fine, even a distinguished book.

—RONALD NEVANS

Storyteller
by Leslie Marmon Silko
Seaver Books, 278 pp., $16.95

MEMORY AND INVENTION are the stuff of Silko's storytelling. Although many of her stories traverse familiar territory—the dislocation of a disinherited people—her perceptions are acute, and her style reflects the breadth, the texture, the mortality of her subjects.

The title story, set in Alaska, establishes the theme of cultural conflict that dominates the book. The strongest story, perhaps, is "Coyote Holds a Full House in His Hand," a gently ironic tale of a wastrel of the Laguna tribe and his lackadaisical pursuit of a Hopi woman with deliciously fat thighs.

A continuing verse narrative is interspersed with the stories and establishes Silko's credentials: A member of the Laguna Pueblo, she grew up with "an entire history, entire vision of the world which depended upon memory and retelling. . . ." Her skills were shaped by tribal stories and the photographs from Grandpa Hank's old camera that illustrate the book. Silko is more successful here, than in her well-received novel *Ceremony*, as she explores connections between present and past, and spins the storyteller's ancient magic. "With these stories of ours," she observes, "we can escape almost anything/with these stories we will survive."

—JAMES POLK

If on a winter's night a traveler
by Italo Calvino
translated by William Weaver
Harcourt Brace Jovanovich
288 pp., $12.95

IN THE PROLOGUE of his new novel, Italo Calvino addresses the reader, gets him relaxed and reading *If on a winter's night a traveler*—then breaks the story off. Re-addressing the reader, Calvino explains that he is holding a misbound copy and when he returns it to the bookstore, he finds he wasn't even reading the new Calvino novel but a Polish mystery instead, *Outside the town of Malbork*. So the reader gets a copy of the Polish mystery and takes *it* home, after trading phone numbers with fellow reader Ludmilla who has also read the wrong book. Once more, after reading a chapter, both find that their books were misbound and that they are actually reading a Cimmerian novel *Leaning from the steep slope*. Ludmilla tells the reader that she'll meet him at Professor Uzzi-Tuzzii's office—he's a scholar of Cimmerian and will straighten them out.

Then Uzzi-Tuzzii reads to the reader from a Cimmerian manuscript—which breaks off. What's more, this Cimmerian novel is a fake, cries Uzzi-Tuzzii, it's actually in Cimbrian and its real title is *Without fear of wind or vertigo*. And so on, through more miscontinuations that continue nothing, with each attempting to present itself in a distinct style.

Distinct perhaps but pointless, as each novel beginning melts into a flux of macaronic effects that refuse to tell stories, stultifying paragraphs beyond recall five minutes after reading, and of such brain-grinding boredom that it is impossible for the reader to keep his head upright.

—DONALD NEWLOVE

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Nonfiction Briefs

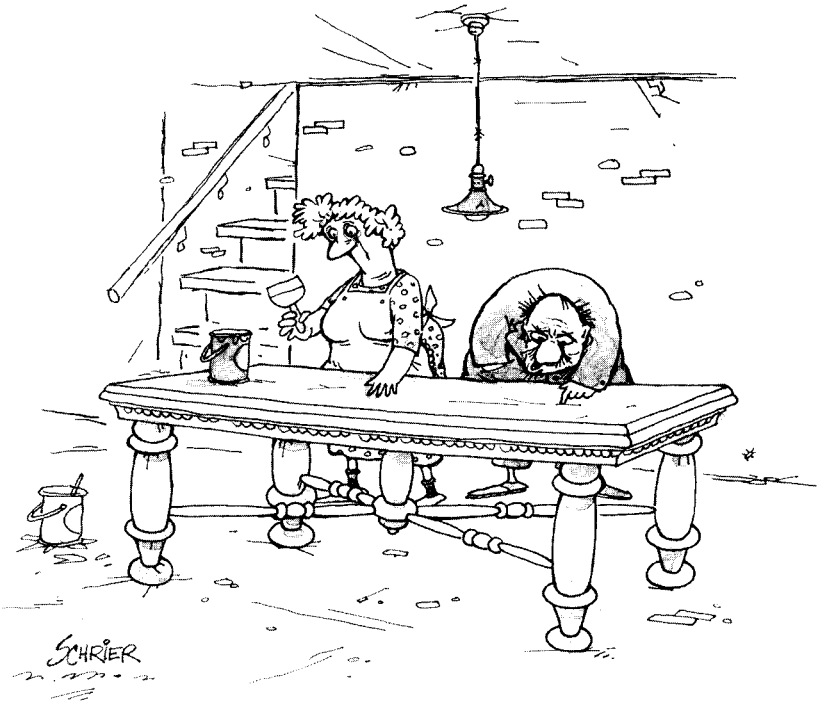
The Eagle's Gift
by Carlos Castaneda
Simon & Schuster, 288 pp., $12.95

THE EAGLE'S GIFT is phase six in Castaneda's continuing adventures in search of the mystical "Yaqui way of knowledge." His Mexican Indian mentor, Don Juan, has long since vanished into incorporeity and the "third awareness," leaving behind his motley group of sorcerer's apprentices to stumble along on their own. Juan isn't completely absent from this account, however: Carlos meets up with him again during his "controlled dream" wanderings and they continue their flipped-out Socratic dialogues.

Castaneda writes once more in the preface that this is not a work of fiction, neither is it strictly speaking anthropology. The second assertion is easier to accept. Still it isn't necessary to believe to get swept up in Castaneda's otherworldly narrative; like myth it works a strange and beautiful magic beyond the realm of belief. It is Castaneda's achievement to have made a world of ghosts, sorcerers, and demons live for the overly rational, hyper-educated modern mind (many respectable university types took this stuff quite seriously in the beginning, though they may be embarrassed about it now). It's refreshing to be reminded of our more primitive religious impulses; to experience once again a world of tangible wonders rather than lifeless principles. (It must be said, however, that this is perhaps the least involving of the Castaneda opus; he seems to be getting more dogmatic as he goes along.) Sometimes, admittedly, one gets the impression of a con artist simply glorying in the game—even so, it is a con touched by genius. —JOSHUA GILDER

The Year 2081:
A Hopeful View of the Human Future
by Gerard K. O'Neill
Simon & Schuster, 384 pp., $14.95

GERARD O'NEILL has previously popularized the idea of space colonies, and they also dominate this new book,



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ostensibly a survey of life 100 years from now. With unlimited solar energy and ample raw material sent from the moon by mass-drivers, these space colonies will be giant hubs of activity and leisure; in *The Year 2081* they seem effortlessly inevitable.

Many of O'Neill's other predictions for the future are not so startling: Computers will become universal when ordinary-language commands are perfected; automation will move to higher stages; automobiles will be liquid-hydrogen propelled; solar energy will be collected in space and sent to earth by microwave; underground magnetic trains will travel at supersonic speed.

However, we are also asked to believe that a space colony of 20,000, mining a small rock far beyond the asteroid belt, can finance its few economic needs by selling homemade art; that sheep may safely graze beneath a massive antenna collecting satellite-beamed microwaves; and that Mars is too irrelevant to even mention, while some of O'Neill's beloved space colonies do great business as ski resorts. A general rule for books of this kind: Visionary desire usually outstrips reason.

—CHARLES NICOL

Extinction: The Causes and Consequences of the Disappearance of Species
by Paul and Anne Ehrlich
Random House, 290 pp., $14.95

IN THIS ERA of hard-headed economic "realism," what concern have we with the snail darter and the thousands of other species that are on the verge of extinction as the result of homo sapiens' activities? The Ehrlichs, noted biologists and environmental crusaders, do a remarkably thorough job of providing crystal-clear answers. To the long list of obvious economic benefits humanity derives from other species, the Ehrlichs add an array of other intriguing benefits. For instance: 8.5 million unnamed species—one of which could contain the cure for cancer within its genes—might far outweigh the value of the human endeavors that are driving them to extinction.

The Ehrlichs aren't stylists of popular science on a par with Lewis Thomas or Stephen Jay Gould, but they are consistently lucid and hypnotically convincing. *Extinction* is a definitive manual of hard-headed arguments for environmental debates to come.

—PHILLIP JOHNSON

Twelve Years:
An American Boyhood in East Berlin
by Joel Agee
Farrar, Straus & Giroux
324 pp., $14.95

IN 1948, eight-year-old Joel Agee, only son of novelist and film critic James Agee, left a home in Mexico with his mother Alma (Agee's second wife), his younger brother Stefan, and stepfather Bodo Uhse, an East German Communist writer, to take up residence at a resort for writers and artists near Potsdam in the German Democratic Republic. Here Joel Uhse (as he thought of himself then) settled for a decade into

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the role of a Communist schoolboy.

Agee records the perils and pleasures of that period in this keenly carved and passionately recollected memoir, of his passage from childhood to young manhood. His accounts of his "rebellious" adolescence as a devout Stalinist at a time when his stepfather and most of his Communist Party friends were fast losing their convictions, and his touching reconstructions of his relationship with his famous father—who died when Joel was 16—stand out among a number of beautifully narrated events.

Agee's unpretentious style, his dogged quest for the truth of memory, the sheer novelty of some of his experiences and the universal appeal of others, combine to make his book one of the finest moments of literary autobiography since Frank Conroy's *Stop-Time*.

—ALAN CHEUSE

Texas Rich: The Hunt Dynasty From the Early Days Through the Silver Crash
by Harry Hurt III
W.W. Norton, 448 pp., $16.95

CARDSHARP, OIL WILDCATTER, bigamist, health faddist, right-wing propagandist, H.L. Hunt lived a life tailor-made for a television docudrama—a combination of *Dallas* and *Hee Haw*, directed by Norman Lear.

Harry Hurt, a writer for *Texas Monthly*, produces clichés whenever he reaches for stylistic effects. But the striking vignettes are here: the young hustler outmaneuvering speculator "Dad" Joiner to start his empire; the old mogul sitting on the porch of his mansion, holding hands with his wife as they sing "Just Plain Folks." With the use of public records, journalistic sources, and dozens of interviews with family members, associates, and rivals, Hurt has built a brick-by-brick account of just how Hunt did it. The narrative becomes more diffuse when it gets to the second generation and Hurt has to keep track of three large families. That's easy when they're suing one another over H.L.'s estate, difficult when they're swashbuckling on their own. Overall, Hurt does manage to transcend mere docudrama. By keeping his own cool, he makes us take seriously the Hunts' money, power, and ambition.

—LUTHER SPOEHR

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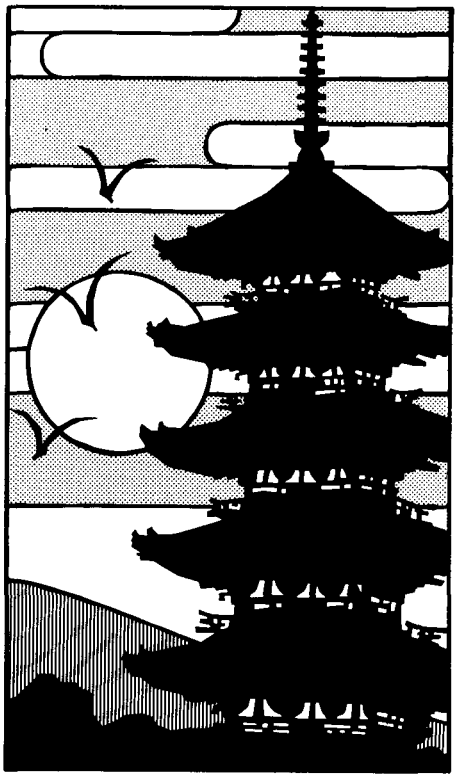

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FILM

Judith Crist

In Search of Bread and Circuses

It is indeed the bread and circuses we long for at the movies, seeking the sustenance of human drama and the exhilaration of cinematic imagination.

Human drama? Do we find it in Martin Ritt's **Back Roads**, where we are reassured once again that prostitutes do have hearts of gold? The carats are allegedly best assessed in this case by broken-down but principled prizefighters. But the carats are out-glittered by the clichés, and the only purity at hand is that of pure boredom, as we once again watch Sally Field go through the gutsy-but-darlin' routines and pratfalls that make one forget the quality of her Sybil on television and Norma Rae on the large screen.

Nor is human drama to be found amid the pretensions of **Thief**, wherein James Caan and Tuesday Weld give fleeting credibility to Michael Mahn's artsy-smartsy ennobling of a hi-tech burglar, whom we are supposed to admire simply because his diamond thefts victimize insurance companies and he is in turn victimized by "organized" criminals.

There have been glimmers of honest feeling and innate humanism from abroad. Italy's **Café Express** attempts—because of our pleasures in *Bread and Chocolate*—to capitalize on the Chaplinesque qualities of Nino Manfredi, and Manfredi is certainly appealing. But director Nanni Loy's sluggish slapstick comedy, about a Neapolitan peddling coffee illegally at night on commuter trains, turns out to be not only parochial but also tedious.

Hungary's Marta Meszaros's **Nine Months** simply offers proof, by way of a Hungarian-speaking heroine and Polish-speaking Hungarian-dubbed hero, that there is little communication between the sexes even in present-day Hungary. The story here is of a factory worker who doggedly refuses to marry while cheerfully bearing out-of-wedlock babies. The woman who portrays this heroine, Lili Monori, won the best-actress award at the Teheran Film Festival for this role in which she actually gave birth on screen. Obviously, the part took preparation.

From France, Michel Deville's **Voyage en Douce** reaches for commonality in its story of two women, friends since adolescence, who take a holiday together. But what might have been a perception of intimate feminism, courtesy of Dominique Sanda and Geraldine Chaplin, turns instead into a soft-porn exploitation of subliminal lesbianism or, at best, bisexuality. Deville had 15 men and women writers provide him with "sexual or sensual" anecdotes with which he pads out his story of two married women meandering through the lovely countryside on a house-hunting expedition. There are moments of charm, compassion, empathy—but in the director's all-too-obviously masculine concept, the two are interested in nothing but discussions of sexual experiences, real or imagined, during their several days together, as they flirt with a variety of males and with each other. It's a good hook for a sexploitation flick, given class by these two beautiful and exciting actresses. And that, alas, is all it is, to be appreciated by those who can be interested by women (or men as well) whose intellectual concerns are strictly below the belt.

Where, then, is the real sustenance? It can be found in traditional but deeply affecting terms in Moshe Mizrahi's **I Sent a Letter to My Love**, a French film that reunites the Israeli filmmaker with Simone Signoret, his star of *Madame Rosa*. This new work, based by Mizrahi and Gerard Brach on Bernice Rubens's novel, is a "small" film in the best sense and a triumph of ensemble performance by Signoret, Jean Rochefort, and Delphine Seyrig.

This is a study of devotion, of love, of frustration, and of the risks we take and settlements we make in middle age. The plot is neatly contrived: A woman has for some 20 years cared for her wheelchair-bound brother in their seaside family home. The years have taken their toll and each of them is privately conscious of the passions that have passed them by, of the abyss that affection cannot fill, while they resort to overt routines and bickerings to shield the inner angst. And then one day the woman makes a last stab at romance with an ad in the personal column of a local newspaper. She gets one enthusiastic response—from her brother.

What in a simpler time became *The Shop Around the Corner* turns into an engrossing household melodrama, the complexity of suppressed dreams and desires probed only by indirection. These are ordinary people, but because of the extraordinary talents at hand we are privy to an exploration of the varieties of love that sustain us as siblings, friends, and solitaries. Signoret, almost a monument as Madame Rosa, is remarkable in her understated portrayal of a woman facing her own desperation, tempted into foolish risks and finally into accepting the truths of time and circumstance. And she is more than complemented by Rochefort, as a man of sensitivity and aspiration, and by Seyrig, a comedic revelation as a childish friend of the family, a vulnerable virgin whose consciousness is raised by a late-in-life pinch of the rump. But Signoret, as has been her professional wont, provides us with that French bread that is the stuff of life.

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As to the circuses—who but Federico Fellini is king of the carnival with his films that are ignited by the heart and roar off into the outer spaces of the imagination? His **City of Women** is a 140-minute fantasy about feminism that belittles both description and the pretentious analyses it provokes. The only course is to surrender, as the filmmaker himself so obviously has, to the pure pleasures and uncertainties of the experience. And an experience it is, as every Fellini film has been in the 30 years since *Variety Lights*. Nothing has been lost along the way: Fellini always brings his personal and artistic baggage with him. For this most grandiose of his recent grandiosities he takes his protagonist (or alter ego) of *8½*, again in the person of Marcello Mastroianni, from a Sixties sensibility to an Eighties awareness. In that earlier film, it was a man of 40 concerned with family and work, the artist on hold. Now—Fellini is 61, Mastroianni 58—it is a man settled into middle-age and made aware, if only in a dream, of his world in chaos, with feminism battling for progress and male chauvinism's conservatism in decay.

Asked which "side" he is on, Fellini, of course, told an interviewer, "I am just a tourist, a passerby. I am in Studio No. 5 in Cinecittà, where I belong." He is, in fact, both tourist with the inevitable—and in his case magic—camera and tour leader, and we explore the world of women with a respect and devotion that not all the outrage of the professional feminists he so wittily satirizes can obscure for a moment. Fellini is, with Bergman—and one could add Joseph Mankiewicz, George Cukor, and one or two other American filmmakers—a lover of women, as his films make clear. One does not need his assurance that they are "everything." "I even see the cinema itself as a woman," he told the interviewer, "with its alternation of light and darkness, of appearing and disappearing images. Going to the cinema is like returning to the womb .... One should go ... with the innocence of a fetus."

One should go innocent (as one does to a circus) to *City of Women* and accompany Mastroianni as he sets off in slavering pursuit of a fellow train passenger who has caught his lickerish eye, and plunge with him into the surreal world of women and womanizers, of a playland of memory, of sexist arenas and pleasure palaces. As always with Fellini, it is the familiar or subconscious truth that is touched upon. But Fellini brings it to a new vision—and it is the vision that enthralls and exhilarates. On occasion he lingers too long on the obvious or pushes a point past revelation, but again—as always—if it is too much, it is of a very good thing indeed. Circus-like, the acts are, comfortingly, unchanged but the razzle-dazzle and spangles and lights provide thrills and chills and pure delight. ■

Male movie-goers, watching idealized actresses, are placed symbolically into a huge bed by Fellini in *City of Women*.

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THEATER

Stanley Kauffmann

"Lolita" Undone

When Donald Sutherland strode on stage as Humbert Humbert in **Lolita**, he radiated at once the odd combination of modesty and assurance, ease and skill, charm and reticence that has made his screen presence a pleasure. We felt immediately that this man was completely in command and meant to do all he could not to flaunt it. As he addressed us—and about 50 percent of his role was direct address to us—he implied a promise that he would make this eccentric story absorbing, would tickle its devilish comedy, and would also touch its lyric stature—in short, that Vladimir Nabokov's masterly novel would be honored.

That opening moment—say 10 seconds—was the high point of the evening. The warm surge of those 10 seconds still lives in my memory: The rest is drowned by Edward Albee's deplorable dramatization, which itself is now deservedly sunk. But since it was written by another of America's spurious "great" dramatists—how rich we are in them—a bit of post mortem is in order. Especially since Albee this time mixed debacle with desecration.

He began by confessing failure. The backdrop and wings of William Ritman's setting, within which various scenic pieces moved clumsily during the evening, were covered with graffiti—fragments of Nabokov's language. That decor seemed Albee's admission that Nabokov's genius is in his prose, that the prose is in the *novel* as such, and that the play would have to be lesser. It was, inevitably, shorter than the book; it was also so much shallower that it became a different, corrupted work. A complex, gorgeously orchestrated black comedy, a poem of an obsession faced poetically, a slyly dramatized clash of the defects in European and American moralities, became a drooling account of a clinical perversion and its mucky end.

The film of *Lolita* (1962), directed by Stanley Kubrick from a screenplay attributed to Nabokov—who subsequently published the screenplay precisely as he had written it—had severe faults but some merits, too. Nabokov himself called the film "first-rate" while stipulating that Kubrick's view of the novel was not his own. Kubrick was at least able to transmute into cinema language some of the neon-lighted fabric of America, some of the dizzying prism of characters, some of the ludicrous agonies of the motel odyssey that enwrap this love story of a 38-year-old foreigner and his 12-year-old "nymphet" stepdaughter. Transmutations like Kubrick's are impossible in the theater. Then what was Albee left with, if he could not do with Nabokov's prose at least something of what the film could do? He could extract the sex stuff. He could make the script an act of daring, giving the cast things to say and do that would have been absolutely taboo 20 years ago. Albee's *Lolita* was nothing more than another exploitation of the sexual license that he and some coeval playwrights apparently wish they could have had when they started.

Albee not only stripped, he added. In the published screenplay, Nabokov used the fictitious editor-psychiatrist of the foreword as narrator. Albee used the author himself, coyly dubbed A Certain Gentleman, used him throughout as companion to Humbert Humbert, though visible and audible to no one else; and Albee gave this Gentleman dialogue of excruciatingly banal pseudo elegance. In this role Ian Richardson, heroically managing to stay awake, uttered such witticisms as "No doubt" and "I daresay" in a sophomoric caricature of suavity.

Shirley Stoler played Lolita's mother whom Humbert marries en route to the daughter. Stoler is so gross that Humbert's marital duties, demanded constantly by her, boggled more than the imagination. Blanche Baker had the snap role of Lolita: Any young actress who could look the part could do it. Clive Revill, a failed protean actor, continued to fail in the senselessly curtailed character of Clare Quilty, the hunter and hunted of Humbert. Frank Dunlop's direction acutely hit every chance for vulgarity-posing-as-wit.

Nabokov said he published his screenplay as a "vivacious variant" of his novel. Albee's dramatization was a vitiated variant. But I'm grateful for those 10 Sutherland seconds.

Should this column be printed with a thick black border? There's still more bad news about Albee. For some years I've been saying that, since his playwriting powers had apparently faded, he might use his demonstrated intelligence and critical ability as a dramaturg—a literary-manager/production collaborator in the European tradition that is just coming into practice in America. Albee made his first move in that direction by serving as artistic director for a bill of three new American one-act plays presented in the Newhouse, the one well-designed theater in the whole Lincoln Center complex. It's distressing to report dank results for this Albee effort, too.

Stops Along the Way by Jeffrey Sweet, about a man returning his lover to her husband, had dialogue of smug *Village Voice* candor rather than realism of any resonance. **In Fireworks Lie Secret Codes** by John Guare, about a group of people on a Manhattan terrace watching a Fourth of July display, was drenched in that gassy

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JIM COLBURN/PHOTOREPORTERS

Donald Sutherland as Humbert Humbert and Blanche Baker as Lolita in Edward Albee's "desecration" of Nabokov's novel.

tremulousness that I thought had gone out with the "serious" plays of Philip Barry. **Vivien** by Percy Granger, about the visit of a young theater director to his father in a mental hospital, had the virtue of (apparently) stenographic rendering of the demented father's dialogue, but the play did no more than milk the poignancy that was inherent from the start.

Probably it was naive to expect these plays to be better than most new American plays just because they were shorter, but where was Albee the dramaturg? Aside from his taste in selecting them, how much did he work with these authors—one of a dramaturg's chief functions—on the development of their scripts?

Very little, I hope. Because if he worked with them a lot, then his future as dramaturg is no brighter than his writing prospects.

Broadway must have hits. In New York that is a law, and it comes before the Second Law of Thermodynamics. Every night in Manhattan, a certain bundle of bucks *must* change hands—the owners of the bucks insist on it—and Broadway must be one of the beneficiaries. That's one of the reasons that New York exists.

So when there aren't enough hits from the conventional processes, shows have to be invented to fill the gap. One device—not new but lately used a lot—is the concert, togged out as a revue but still a concert, sometimes devoted (mostly) to the work of one composer. One such was the delightful Fats Waller show, *Ain't Misbehavin'*. Now comes the bigger, splashier **Sophisticated Ladies**, most of the songs by Duke Ellington.

A large band sits on stage almost all of the time, led by Mercer Ellington, the composer's gray-haired son. Thirty-six numbers are sung and danced by a black and white cast in front of the band or up and down the band-platform steps. Lots of glitz, lots of Cotton Club atmosphere in the costumes and trappings, but it's still 36 numbers in front of a band. Up to intermission, it's pretty entertaining; after intermission, you realize that you're being given more to justify your time and money but that the second half really deflates the first.

Some of the performers are excellent. A tall black singer named Phyllis Hyman is gorgeous and warm-voiced. Judith Jamison, a world-famous dancer, is given poor choreography but manages her Junoesque body as if she were petite, and in her more svelte numbers and costumes there's a lovely suggestion of Josephine Baker. One demurral. The male star of the show, Gregory Hines, affects me like Sammy Davis Jr.—lots of talent, little appeal.

The most interesting aspect of the show was to hear so much of Ellington's music, and not because all of it is good. The biggies are still big—"Mood Indigo," "Sophisticated Lady," a few others—but most of the others are paradoxical: They are not distinctive, they're revealing. Seemingly Ellington was trying to use the pop song the way other composers have used the art song (Hugo Wolf, to pick a pinnacle). Ellington was trying to make Tin Pan Alley structures respond seriously, personally, intensely. He had an inferior melodic gift to Waller's or, certainly, George Gershwin's, but he was trying to break some new ground, and this show, otherwise intended, reminds us of that ambition. ■

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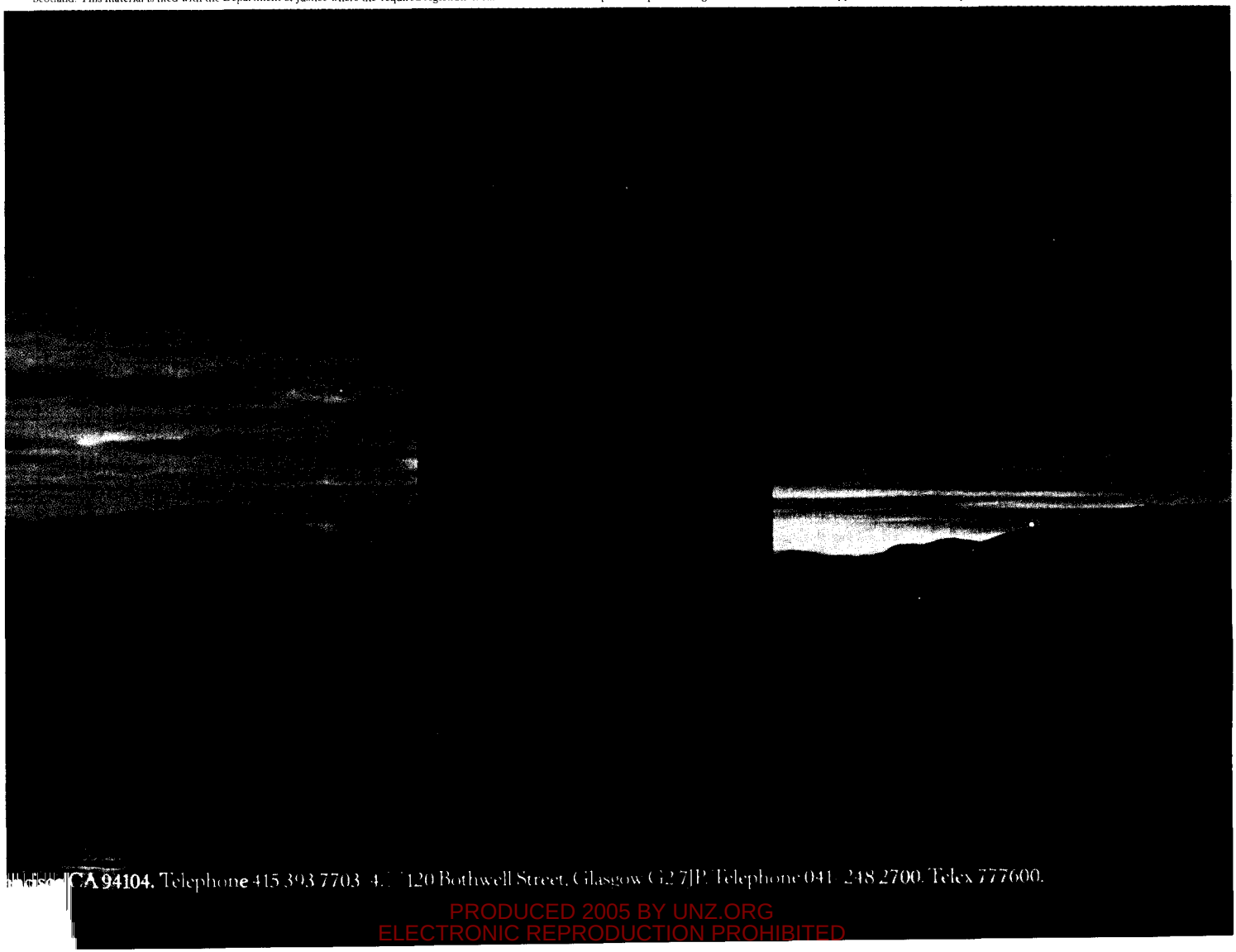

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DANCE

Walter Terry

The Male Dancer

One thousand children, mostly little boys, from 20 elementary schools in New York City and suburbs, are busy practicing *grands jetés* and *tours en l'air* for a huge dance wingding to be held June 1 in the Felt Forum of Madison Square Garden. These dancers, all between the ages of eight and 13, are the cream of some 7,000 children whose very special "Pied Piper" is the great American premier danseur, Jacques d'Amboise.

D'Amboise was only 15 himself when he became a member of the newly formed New York City Ballet more than 30 years ago. He rose very swiftly from corps de ballet member to the world-famous troupe's principal male dancer. It wasn't easy in those days for an American boy to choose ballet as a career. D'Amboise hasn't forgotten. **The National Dance Institute**, founded and headed by d'Amboise to rectify this situation, had modest, domestic origins. In 1966, he wanted his sons, George and Christopher, then 10 and seven, to discover the joy of dancing without being forced to go to formal ballet class. The brothers asked a few of their schoolmates to participate. They wore ordinary street clothes; d'Amboise had them pile their coats on the floor; then they were invited to jump over them while a pianist played "jumping music." Thus did eight little boys unknowingly learn the rudiments of the *grand jeté*.

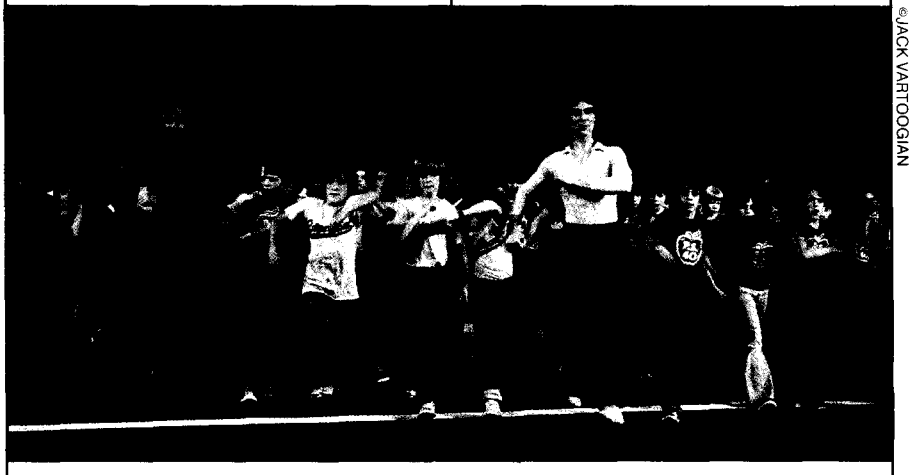
Today, d'Amboise and an assisting faculty of professional dancers bring ballet, modern dance, jazz, and ethnic forms to thousands of kids in public, private, and parochial schools in New York City, Long Island, Westchester County, and parts of New Jersey through the National Dance Institute. The goal, simply stated, is "to establish dance as an everyday part of the cultural life of America."

The NDI's aim is not to produce professional dancers, but rather to expose every child in America to dance. However, from the 20 schools served by d'Amboise and his associates, a unit of specially gifted children who indicate an interest in a dance career are given extra instruction in ballet. Some of these eventually go from this class into George Balanchine's School of American Ballet and from there into the New York City Ballet. One of these boys was Christopher d'Amboise, now a valued member of the City Ballet.

The d'Amboise enterprise, big as it is, represents only a part of a changing picture of the place of men in dance. Lynn Swann, star wide-end receiver for the Pittsburgh Steelers says: "Peter Martins could have become a great athlete just as some of us might have become successful dancers, if prejudice had not stood in the way." Today, as a member of the board of directors of the Pittsburgh Ballet Theater, he says, "By my being on the board, I'm acting as a bridge between the fans of our team and the fans of ballet, and I hope by doing this, all of these fans will discover the similarities between these two great activities."

Ironically, as we progress into a new era of equality for women, we have been moving into the male era of ballet and of modern dance. The dance superstars, starting with Rudolf Nureyev and his spectacular leap to the west 20 years ago, are men. Yet despite the triumphs of Nureyev, Baryshnikov, Godunov from the USSR; of a small army of brilliant male dancers trained in the Royal Danish Ballet; and of a growing force of American male dance stars beginning with such ballet principals as John Kriza and Leon Danelian and continuing with d'Amboise, Villella, Bujones, there remains a residue of prejudice against the male dancer, particularly the male ballet dancer.

During the last presidential campaign when it was reported that a candidate's son (Ron Reagan) was a ballet dancer, the notation continued with "*but* he's all man." Meanwhile, men such as Jacques d'Amboise, dancer-athlete, and Lynn Swann, athlete-dancer, are working to remove all "buts" concerning dancing for boys and men forever, and your son will be accorded *his* right to dance. ■



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Baryshnikov hoofs it with Jacques d'Amboise and his troupe of fledgling dancers.

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Irving Kolodin

Musgrave's Progress

Three women—two living, one dead—dominated the contemporary novelty in this spring's New York City Opera season at Lincoln Center. The living two were composer Thea Musgrave and soprano Ashley Putnam; the historical figure on whom they combined their efforts was the Scottish Queen Mary whose life came to an unhappy end by execution in 1587 during the reign of England's Queen Elizabeth I.

The drama of Mary's execution has kept her memory vividly alive throughout Scottish history. But there are many other dramatic aspects of her stormy career, and it is out of these that **Mary, Queen of Scots** has become a landmark in Musgrave's progress as an opera composer.

For *Mary,* Musgrave has written her own text, which is a step ahead of her previous opera, *The Voice of Ariadne*, which had its New York premiere under the same auspices in 1977. This puts the composer in a strategically sure position to make use of the broad abilities for instrumental writing she has shown elsewhere.

Over a period that begins with Mary's return from an enforced residence in France and ends with her abdication only six years later, Musgrave is sometimes dealing with fact and sometimes with fiction, but always with a strong feeling for the subject matter. Her opera basically concerns the dilemma of a young queen of Scotland (as of 1561) caught in the midst of hostilities and animosities, uncertainties and amoralities arising from her bloodlines. The uncertainties are complicated by the ambitions of her half brother, James.

Much about Musgrave's treatment is resourceful, theatrically intelligent, and musically absorbing. But there is also a lack of consistency in style of character projection that cuts into the story-telling by putting emphasis on verbal detail rather than on its combination with musical substance.

Musically, in such episodes as the latter part of Act I, when Mary has made her choice between whom to love and whom to marry—not always an easy decision in royal circles—and later on, as the lullabying mother of the heir who will eventually become England's James I, king of both Scotland *and* England, Musgrave's music spreads an appetizing melodic icing on an unfailingly well-baked instrumental cake. But elsewhere, declamatory delivery of the text preempts the flow of musical line.

Contemporary composer Thea Musgrave.

For the opera's first New York showing, *Mary, Queen of Scots* benefited from the visual presence in the title role of Ashley Putnam. She brought to the challenge of depicting a queen who ascended her throne at 19, a tall figure, admirable good looks, and physical flexibility: a picturesque queen and a sympathetic one. Putnam has risen to international prominence thanks to a high, supple sound for standard works such as Donizetti's *Lucia*.

But Musgrave's Mary is not such a role. It is dramatically demanding in sound as well as in sight. The moment of truth came, inescapably, in Act II during a scene in which Mary undertakes to enlist her half brother in support of her reign, hoping to avoid a military challenge. In such crucial passages, Mary's power was precisely what Putnam lacks vocally.

The well-designed production was otherwise abundantly provided with well-qualified male performers, of whom the long experienced Richard Fredricks, as Moray, the queen's half brother, was, as expected, excellent. Among the younger performers, Barry Busse, as the Earl of Bothwell, mustered a sound and stature that should take him far; and Kenneth Bell, in the cameo part of David Riccio, displayed an Italian elegance that was all-too-purposefully appropriate (he provokes Lord Darnley—played by Rico Serbo—chosen by Mary as her consort, into spitefully murdering him). The conducting of Peter Mark, who is Musgrave's husband, was also an asset.

Considering the magnitude of the problems presented by *Mary, Queen of Scots*, Musgrave merits high praise and encouragement for whatever she chooses to do next operatically. But the segmenting of length into acts remains to be resolved.

The late Sir Thomas Beecham, talking about operatic composers from Mozart to Puccini (whose works he had conducted with equal zest) once expressed admiration for the "inner clock" that guided them into measuring time precisely to an emotional climax and a theatrical curtain. Verdi also had it, as did Massenet at his best.

However, as Musgrave might note from the operatic productivity of these four men, the clock takes a lot of winding before it functions intuitively. We wish her happy winding. ■

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HOME ENTERTAINMENT

Peter Caranicas and Michael Heiss

The Best New Equipment

When you want to buy audio or video components you go to your local dealer and choose from a wide assortment of brands. But did you ever wonder where your dealer goes to see what's new in the world of consumer electronics and to pick the items his customers can purchase a few months later? The answer is the semiannual Consumer Electronics Show (CES), one of American industry's largest trade gatherings.

Up to 60,000 audio and video retailers attend the mammoth convention to sample the latest wares from American, European, and Japanese manufacturers. The winter CES, held in Las Vegas early every January, sets the marketing pace for the year to come; the summer show, convening in Chicago every June, witnesses the unveiling of the following year's new lines. Lovers of music and the arts attending last January's show could have previewed any number of electronic marvels that will soon enhance their listening and viewing pleasure.

For audiophiles, two cassette recorders priced at about $2,000 were especially noteworthy: the Revox B-710 deck, from the fabled Swiss firm, features direct-drive quartz-locked motors along with a built-in clock and microprocessor controls; the Tandberg TCD-3004, five years in the making, allows its users to calibrate for any tape type and includes special equalizer circuits to assure high recording quality.

Can anyone have failed to notice that many joggers now perform their ritualistic runs with wires and earphones wrapped around their heads? Upon closer examination, the apparatus turns out to be a small audiocassette recorder with ultra-lightweight headphones—one of the hottest new audio products around in a long time. Introduced by Sony a year ago as the "Walkman," its success has bred many lookalikes, all in evidence at the winter show. One of them, the Micro series made by Fisher (an old hi-fi name now undergoing a resurgence under the new ownership of Japan's Sanyo), stands out from the others by virtue of its metal-tape microcassette that's as small as the ones used on dictation machines.

Despite some innovations in audio, video stole the show at the winter CES. Alongside all the new TV sets, videocassette recorders, auto-focusing video cameras, and do-it-yourself backyard satellite receivers, the real star of the show was the videodisc.

Not one but three videodisc systems will soon be competing for consumers' dollars. Right now, the laser-guided "LV" (for "Laservision") system, which boasts features like freeze frame, slow motion, and stereo sound, is sold by Magnavox and Pioneer. A simpler, less expensive system that tracks grooved records—like phonographs—is sold by RCA.

And for those who can wait until early next year, a third major videodisc system—the "VHD"—will be introduced by Panasonic, Quasar, JVC, GE, and possibly some of the Japanese hi-fi brands as well. This system uses a disc similar to RCA's system, but the stylus, rather than actually tracking the grooves, slides above them, picking up electrical, encoded information. Thus it is able to share many of the random-access features of the more sophisticated LV system.

Unfortunately, each of the three systems is incompatible with the other two—which means they cannot play each other's discs. In deciding which one to buy, consumers should pay close attention to the program catalog that accompanies each system. Unlike videocassette recorders, videodisc players can only play back prerecorded material; they cannot record off the air or with a camera. So program availability will be the key to each videodisc system. While special features are a handy luxury, desirable programs are an absolute necessity. ■

DICK LEWIS/DAILY NEWS

Like joggers, mass-transit riders combat tedium with portable cassette recorders.

Peter Caranicas is editor of *View*, a magazine on cable television programming. Michael Heiss writes about consumer electronics for several publications.

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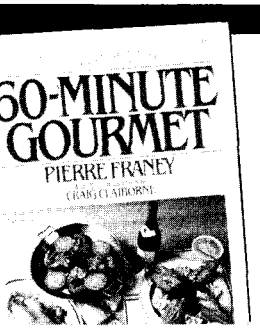

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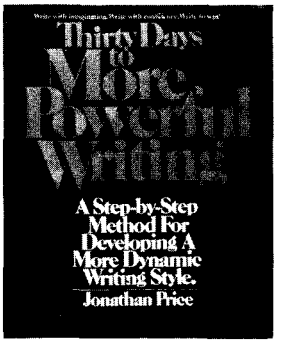

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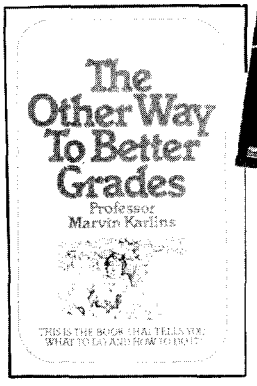

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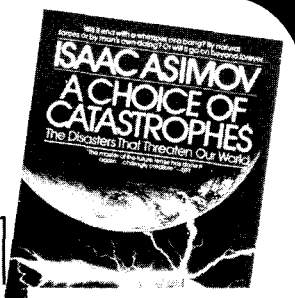

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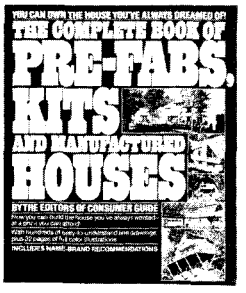

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DIVERSIONS

SR Competition No. 20

Several of our major children have now moved from the college of their choice into the ludicrously misnamed labor force. While they were in transit we read along with them the enticing brochures of various giant corporations (are there any dwarf corporations?). These could make the company headquarters in Pavement Narrows, New Jersey, sound like Acapulco. We admire the skill of these brochure writers no less than we deplore their mendacity. Send us a few upbeat pamphlets describing the allure of Alcatraz, Devil's Island, or, come to think of it, New York City. Or from some growthpotentialpeopleoriented-environmentallyresponsible outfit like Indelible Inc. Send them directly to us, not to our remaining dependents, who might actually apply. The usual $25 to the three most seductive liars.

Entries for Competition No. 20 must be received by June 5 and the winners will be announced in the August issue. Send submissions to *SR* Competition No. 20, *Saturday Review*, 150 East 58 Street, New York, New York 10155. All entries become the property of *SR*.

Winners of No. 17

We are not accusing anyone of wishing us bodily harm, but just as a matter of general interest we thought you might like to know that our cardiologist has detected a curious arhythmia (BUMP de bump, in layman's language) and has forbidden us the dactylic meter altogether henceforward. "Dactylophobia," he diagnosed. "Fear of the finger?" we brightly asked. He smiled.

The doubledactyl contest brought us an unexampled onslaught of entries. Several contestants are professional double dactylists, as it were, and have compilations of their own under way. (Which reminds us: *SR* claims entries as its own property largely for postal convenience, so *of course* you may reprint your work!) But there were *thousands* of entries, to say nothing of erudite quibbles about our allegedly relaxed approach to the question of rules. To everyone thanks; here are the winners, chosen after agonies of deliberation among so many kinds of excellence.

First prize to Anthony Harrington of Marietta, Georgia, any one of whose compositions might have ended in the money, though we like this best:

Higgledy-Piggledy!
Euclid Geometer,
Pained by the asking of
"What is the use

Studying doctrines so
Axiomatical?"
Answered acutely, "Oh,
Don't be obtuse!"

Second prize to Peter Larsen of Lakeview Terrace, California, which is his hometown, not his street:

Tra-la-la, tra-la-la!
Little Red Ridinghood
Skips through the woods with her
Basket of food,

Doomed to encounter a
Transvestite wolf in an
Anthropophagical
Lunch-timey mood.

Third prize to Dr. Blossom Kirschenbaum of Providence, Rhode Island, whose exquisitely witty verse may be limited in its appeal to Soviet history buffs:

Bolshevik, Menshevik!
G.O. Zinoviev,
Communists ruefully
Wish you were not

Stereotypical:
Prisoner, President,
Ousted, forgiven, ar-
Rested, and shot.

Finally, the most honorable of mentions to Randy Stetson of Pasadena, California, to whose second line we took finical exception, since it would have seven syllables in French verse, five in prose, and six (the required number) only in some inadmissible foreign pronunciation. So much for our being lax. We love it:

Jiggery-pokery!
Jean Baptiste Poquelin,
Commonly known to the
World as Molière,

From an acute case of
Hypochondriasis
Died as an invalid
Imaginaire.

Postfinally, for least honorable mention, comes this effort by Chris Doyle of Burke, Virginia, which, paronomastically gives us the creeps (someone stop us!):

Tersery versery!
Browning, Elizabeth,
Ponders in court as the
Evidence mounts.

Called to the stand, she asks,
Jurisprudentially,
"How do I plead? Let me
Weigh all the counts."

Puzzles

Wit Twister No. 177

Edited by Arthur Swan

The object of the game is to complete the poem by thinking of one word whose letters, when rearranged, will yield the appropriate word for each series of blanks. Each dash with a blank corresponds to a letter of the word.

When charming — — — — — — — to the river goeth,
The sun's hot — — — — — — — upon her beauty bloweth;
But when she — — — — — — — all her tempting charms,
Cool waves support the — — — — — — — in their arms.

A.S.

Literary Crypt No. 165

SON AGAIN SNIIK EK SC ICYN CEX UNGMOACXK, TUP TIKC SC ICYN CEX NUNZGNK; LXCATAID ANRTEKN SOND TXN MNUNXTIID SON KTZN LNCLIN.

M.B. RONKSNXSCU

Answers next issue

April Answers

Solution to Wit Twister No. 176

Tornado, odorant, donator

Solution to Literary Crypt No. 164

Only when one has lost all curiosity about the future has one reached the age to write an autobiography.
Evelyn Waugh

Middleton Double-Crostic No. 206

(John) Ciardi: A Browser's Dictionary

A festively topped dish was the "Sunday best" reserved for the once common ritual of stopping for ice cream after church. The variant *sundae* is an advertiser's standard well known to operators of nite clubs and to the manufacturers of Kashew Karunchies.

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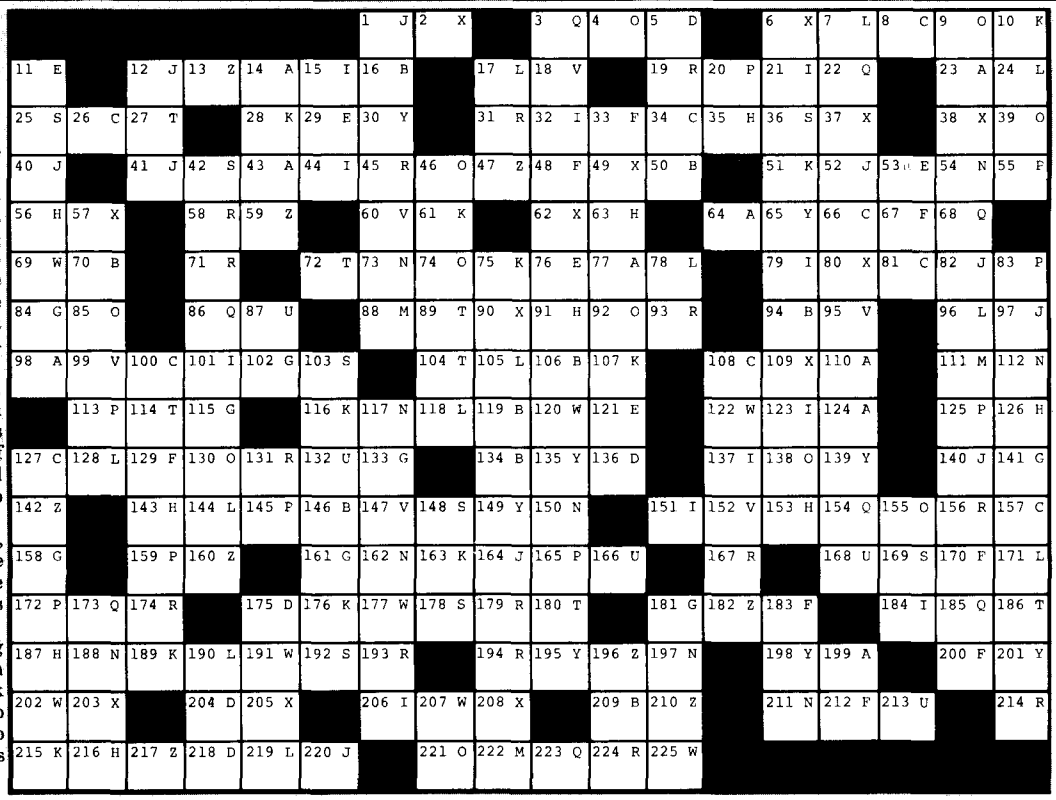
Instructions:
If you've never solved one of these puzzles, it will probably look much more difficult than it actually is. If you can answer only a few of the WORDS correctly, you're on your way to solving the puzzle. Fill in the numbered blanks of all the WORDS you can guess and write the letter of each numbered blank in its correspondingly numbered square in the diagram. The letters printed in the upper-right-hand corners of the squares indicate from what WORD a particular square's letter comes.
The diagram, when filled in, should read as a quotation from a published work. The dark squares are the spaces between words. If there is no dark square at the end of a line, a word may carry over to the line below.
The first letter of each WORD, reading down, will spell the name of the author and the title of the work from which the quotation is taken.
You should find yourself seeing words and phrases taking form in the diagram; so you can work back and forth, from WORDS to diagram and from diagram to WORDS, until the diagram is filled in.



Middleton Double-Crostic No.207

CLUES	WORDS
A. Sketched, planned (2 wds.)	14 23 43 98 110 124 199 64 77
B. Ancient Semitic goddess	106 119 134 146 209 16 50 70 94
C. Small medicinal lozenge (2 wds.)	157 8 26 34 66 81 100 108 127
D. Proper, decorous	136 175 204 218 5
E. Urticaria	11 29 53 76 121
F. Russian-French chess player (1892-1946), became world champion in 1927	129 170 183 200 212 33 48 67
G. Most destitute	84 102 115 133 141 158 161 181
H. Advantageous; profitable	187 126 143 153 216 35 56 63 91
I. Beat it, scram, split (3 wds.)	101 123 21 44 137 151 15 79 184 206 32
J. Overbearing; arbitrary (comp.)	140 164 220 1 12 41 52 82 97 40
K. Slang term for *piano* (comp.)	61 75 116 176 189 163 215 51 10 28 107
L. Tortuous, intricate	128 144 24 78 96 171 219 17 105 190
M. People of lower Niger	7 118 222 88 111
N. Amusing, humorous	112 162 188 197 211 54 73 117 150
O. Heartening, reassuring	155 39 74 92 9 46 4 85 130 138 221
P. German-born American clergyman (1726-1813) founder of United Brethren	20 55 113 125 145 159 172 83 165
Q. Heated, ebullient, excited	223 22 173 185 68 86 154 3
R. American comedian of TV, night clubs, films (*The Loved One*, *The Russians Are Coming, The Russians Are Coming*; full name)	19 31 131 45 58 194 71 93 214 167 156 224 174 179 193
S. Watchful, alert (comp.)	25 42 148 36 169 178 192 103
T. Most ardent, fervent, enthusiastic	114 89 186 27 180 72 104
U. Hilly desert region of S Israel	87 132 166 213 168
V. King of the fairies	18 60 95 152 99 147
W. Stout, stocky (comp.)	122 177 69 191 207 225 202 120
X. 1948 Huxley novel (3 wds.)	38 203 2 62 109 57 6 37 90 80 205 49 208
Y. Strove against	149 195 30 135 65 198 201 139
Z. With all water removed	47 210 182 160 217 196 59 13 142

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SR RECOMMENDS

Books

Fiction

Gorky Park, by Martin Cruz Smith (Random House, 384 pp., $13.95). For this diverting "suspense thriller" Smith has ripped three unidentified corpses, pathologists, reluctant witnesses, tough cops, and smooth villains out of their usual urban-American context and transplanted them into the USSR, throwing into sharp relief those aspects of life that are intriguingly different in Russia.

November, by Rolf Schneider (Alfred A. Knopf, 240 pp., $11.95). A bitter picture of the writer-intellectual's life in East Berlin, with superb moments of strangling moodiness and an iron grip on characters in a rat's maze.

Seagull, by Yashar Kemal, translated by Thilda Kemal (Pantheon, 250 pp., $11.95). Salih, a young Turkish boy, finds a seagull whose wing is broken and spends his restless days and nights trying to persuade someone in the village to cure the gull. A grand and ramshackle examination of how children create their fantasies and choose their obsessions; over the years the novel may become a classic.

What We Talk About When We Talk About Love, by Raymond Carver (Alfred A. Knopf, 159 pp., $9.95). Seventeen tales of Hopelessville, its marriages and alcoholic wreckage, told in a prose as sparingly clear as a fifth of iced Smirnoff.

Winter Count, by Barry Holstun Lopez (Charles Scribner's Sons, 128 pp., $9.95). In these sketches of sensitive observers coming to terms with various kinds of life both wild and tame, Lopez turns the sentiments of ecology lovers into a deeply felt and unnervingly powerful picture of reality.

Nonfiction

Ernest Hemingway: Selected Letters 1917-1961, edited by Carlos Baker (Charles Scribner's Sons, 948 pp., $27.50). Papa's undiluted voice comes through in this hefty sack of letters—direct, pungent, idiosyncratic, and breathing life into the writer.

Mary Chesnut's Civil War, edited by C. Vann Woodward (Yale University Press, 886 pp., $29.95). Mary Chesnut's wit and shrewdness, her fierce abhorrence of slavery, and her feminist ambitions make these observations of the tough-minded but sickly wife of a Confederate politician and plantation-owner peculiarly modern.

Mountbatten, by Richard Hough (Random House, 256 pp., $15). A highly readable informal portrait of the Viceroy of India, cousin to Queen Elizabeth II, from his christening in the arms of his great-grandmother, Queen Victoria, to his IRA-engineered death.

Sand Rivers, by Peter Matthiessen (The Viking Press, 240 pp., $19.95). On safari in the Selous Game Reserve with a writer who is firmly on the side of everything good, like wildernesses, women, and black Africans.

The Terror Network: The Secret War of International Terrorism, by Claire Sterling (Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 334 pp., $13.95). Despite disturbing gaps in the presentation of evidence, Sterling's depiction of the Soviet Union as prime mover of global terrorism is a persuasive one.

Film

Atlantic City. Louis Malle's charmingly offbeat film about small-timers in Casinoland, scripted by playwright John Guare, provides, among many other pleasures, a memorable May-December romance between Susan Sarandon, a waitress with dreams of being Monaco's first female croupier, and Burt Lancaster, an aging hoodlum with delusions of bygone glory, who remembers when "the Atlantic Ocean was really something."

Image Before My Eyes. Through photographs, newsreels, "home movies, and interviews with survivors, this fascinating and ultimately deeply moving documentary, produced with a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, recreates the vital and diverse pre-World War II cultural life of the three million Polish Jews lost in the Holocaust.

Confidence. This film by Istvan Szabo, the Hungarian filmmaker who gave us the superb *Father* in 1966, offers an intriguing view of Nazi-occupied Hungary and of personal relationships in its story of a man and woman forced to leave their spouses and to pose as husband and wife in order to escape the Gestapo.

Nighthawks. With a sophisticated non-*Rocky* Sylvester Stallone as the hunter and Rutger Hawer, the hero of *Soldier of Orange*, as the hunted, this Martin Poll thriller uses New York City to knock-out effect in its nonstop tale of cops vs. an international terrorist.

SR's Phoenix Code

- Outstanding
- Excellent
- Good
- Notable

Theater

The Pirates of Penzance (Uris Theater, New York City). Director Wilford Leach and music director William Elliott set an overall tone of intelligence and charm. This *Pirates* has been put together by contemporary Americans who love and respect the work but who will not try to mimic Victorian Englishmen or their descendants. Unapologetically starring pop singer Linda Ronstadt as Mabel.

The Elephant Man (Booth Theater, New York City). The play—not the movie. An innocent but monstrously disfigured man becomes a socially modish figure in Victorian London. The play satirizes antiquated morality (always an easy target), but its humanity is honest and moving.

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SR RECOMMENDS continued

42nd Street (Winter Garden Theater, New York City). "Hear the beat/of dancing feet," says the title song, and never did a lyric fix a show's essence more neatly. Choreographed by the late Gower Champion on Thirties models, the brisk tappings carry us along on a pleasant tide of nostalgia. The show is just chunks of agreeable stuff that makes us feel things were better back then.

Amadeus (Broadhurst Theater, New York City). Peter Shaffer's saga of the frustration and jealousy in Antonio Salieri (Ian McKellen), the once famous but mediocre Italian-born Viennese composer, over the success and genius of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. A potentially fertile idea, reduced with dramatic gimmicks. Even so, the production merits attention for a bumptious and endearing performance by Tim Curry as an irrepressible Mozart.

Art

An American Choice: The Muriel Kallis Steinberg Newman Collection (The Metropolitan Museum, New York). Over 70 paintings, drawings, and sculptures of the 20th century, as well as important examples of African, Pre-Columbian, and Oceanic art. The collection was profiled in *SR*, October 1980. (Through September 6.)

The Art of Louis Comfort Tiffany (M.H. de Young Memorial Museum, San Francisco). Over 300 works by this exemplary force in turn-of-the-century American decoration. In addition to his familiar windows, vases, and paperweights, Tiffany also produced paintings, photographs, and drawings, all well represented here. (Through August 8.)

Romare Bearden: 1970-1980 (The Baltimore Museum of Art). A survey of this significant black American artist's work in collage during the previous decade. The emphasis is on the figure, and Bearden's style is strongly influenced by jazz traditions. (Through June 14.)

Oskar Kokoschka (Marlborough Gallery, New York). A major exhibition of paintings, some borrowed from museum collections, of this central figure in the development of 20th-century Expressionist traditions. (Through June 13.)

Photography

Photographs of Black Americans by Roland L. Freeman (International Center of Photography, New York). Important documentation of black American life, urban and rural. (Through May 17.)

Dance

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater (City Center, New York City). A repertory season featuring 17 dance works, including five new productions, among them the troupe's first presentation of "The River" (1970), with choreography by Ailey and a commissioned score by the late Duke Ellington. (May 5-24.)

José Limón Dance Company (South American tour). Those who missed this historic modern dance group's splendid New York repertory season, may catch up with the dancers throughout the month in Brazil (Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Brasília, etc.) where the late Limón and his company first performed in 1954 as the first troupe we sent abroad under a cultural exchange program.

Dan Wagoner and Dancers (Schimmel Center, Pace University, New York City). A nationally and internationally popular American modern dance company, in an extensive tour featuring the company's 12th New York season. (May 20-24.)

Pennsylvania Ballet (Brooklyn Academy of Music, New York City). One of the nation's finest ballet companies in its annual visit to New York, this time as the concluding event in the "Ballet America" series. (May 5-10.)

Records

Rossini: William Tell (4-London OSA-1446, $39.92). Although the opening serenade is given a depressingly poor performance, this set goes on to great things. Side 4 alone is worth the price: The big love duet, that finds soprano Mirella Freni and tenor Luciano Pavarotti musically faultless and emotionally combustible is followed by a superb trio for Pavarotti, baritone Sherrill Milnes (Tell), and bass Nicolai Ghiaurov that is no less stirring. Riccardo Chailly, an important young talent, conducts vigorously.

Bruckner: Symphony No. 6 (Deutsche Grammophon 2531 295, $9.98). This is one of Bruckner's more short-winded, compact symphonies, affecting and full of thrust. No one can match Herbert von Karajan on this ground, and no one but the Berlin Philharmonic could give him such playing.

Love, Lust and Piety: Old English songs (German Harmonia Mundi 065-99683 $10.98). This fascinating collection of group songs gives a vivid picture of secular music-making in England, from 1415 (the victory song of the Battle of Agincourt) to 1530 (Henry VIII's own "Pastime With Good Company"). The Pro Cantione Antiqua are mostly soloists in their own right (countertenors James Bowman and Paul Esswood, for instance), but their ensemble work is always keen. The Early Music Consort of London offers gleeful accompaniment. (Available from German News Company, 220 East 86 Street, New York, N.Y. 100028.)

Piano Music of the 20th Century (Deutsche Grammophon 2740 229 $44.90). DG has packaged pianist Maurizio Pollini's impressive discography of 20th-century music in one box, and strong, unexpected links—between the first two Bartók concertos and Boulez's second sonata, for example—come out of the woodwork when you listen straight through. Pollini plays with energy and clarity of thought throughout.

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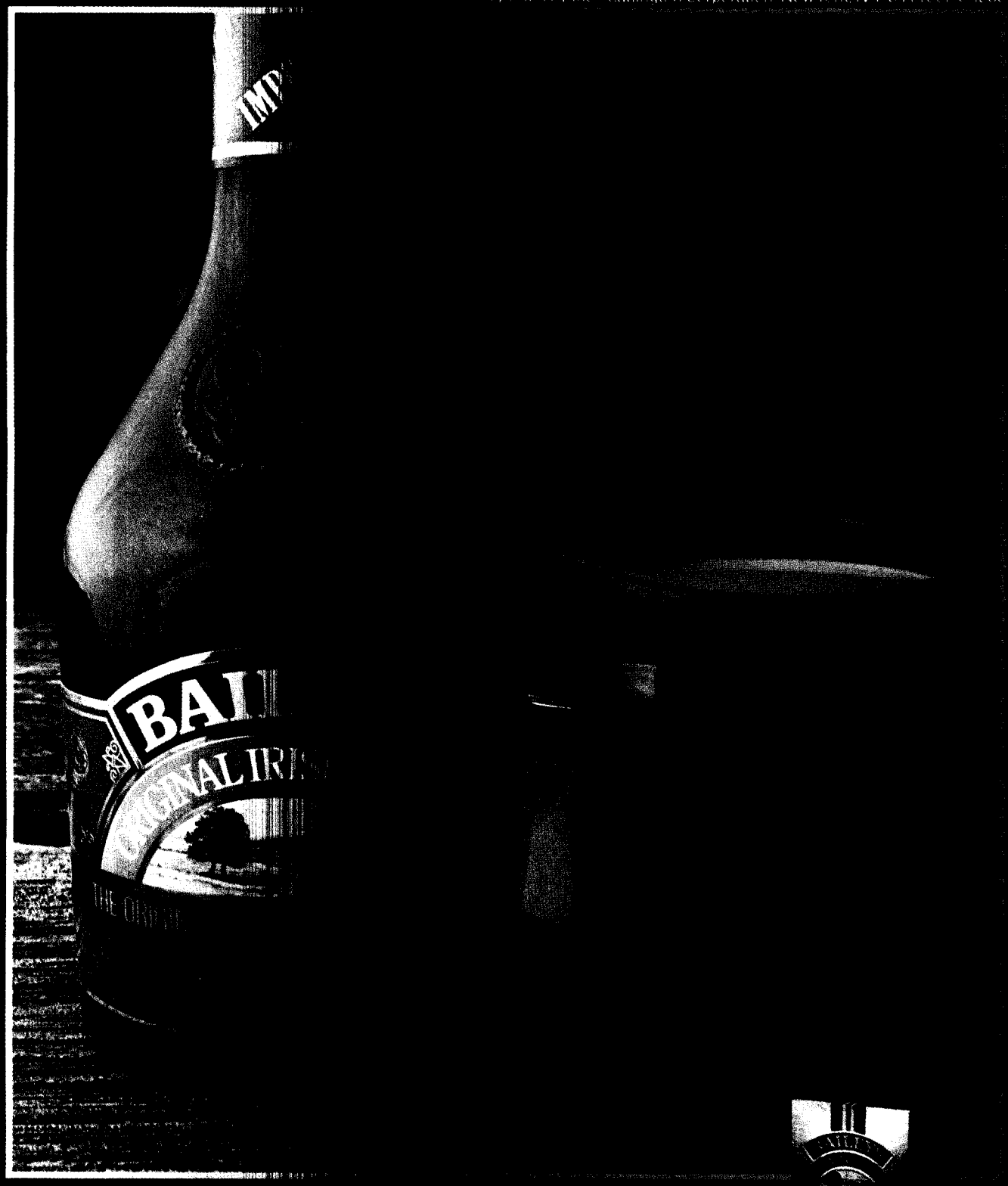

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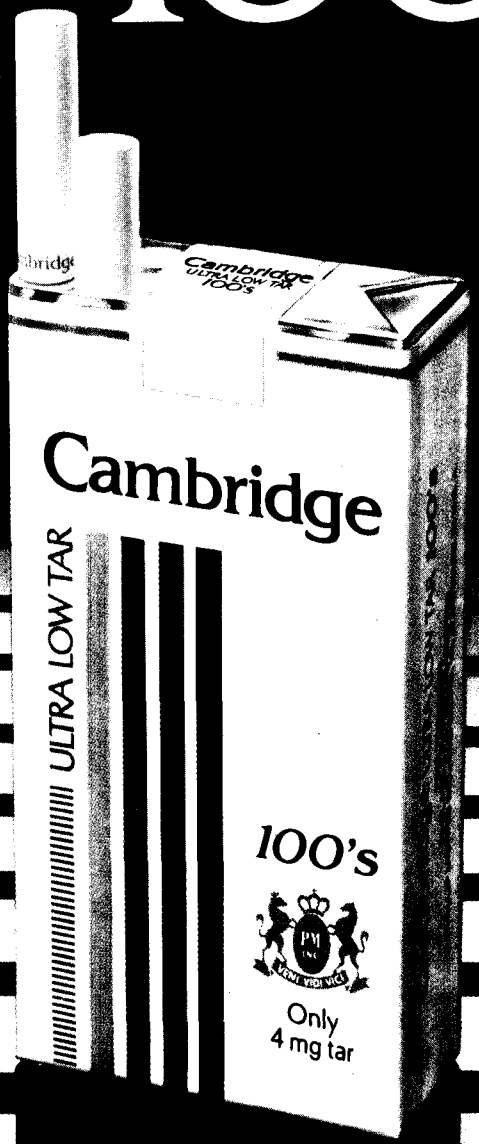

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